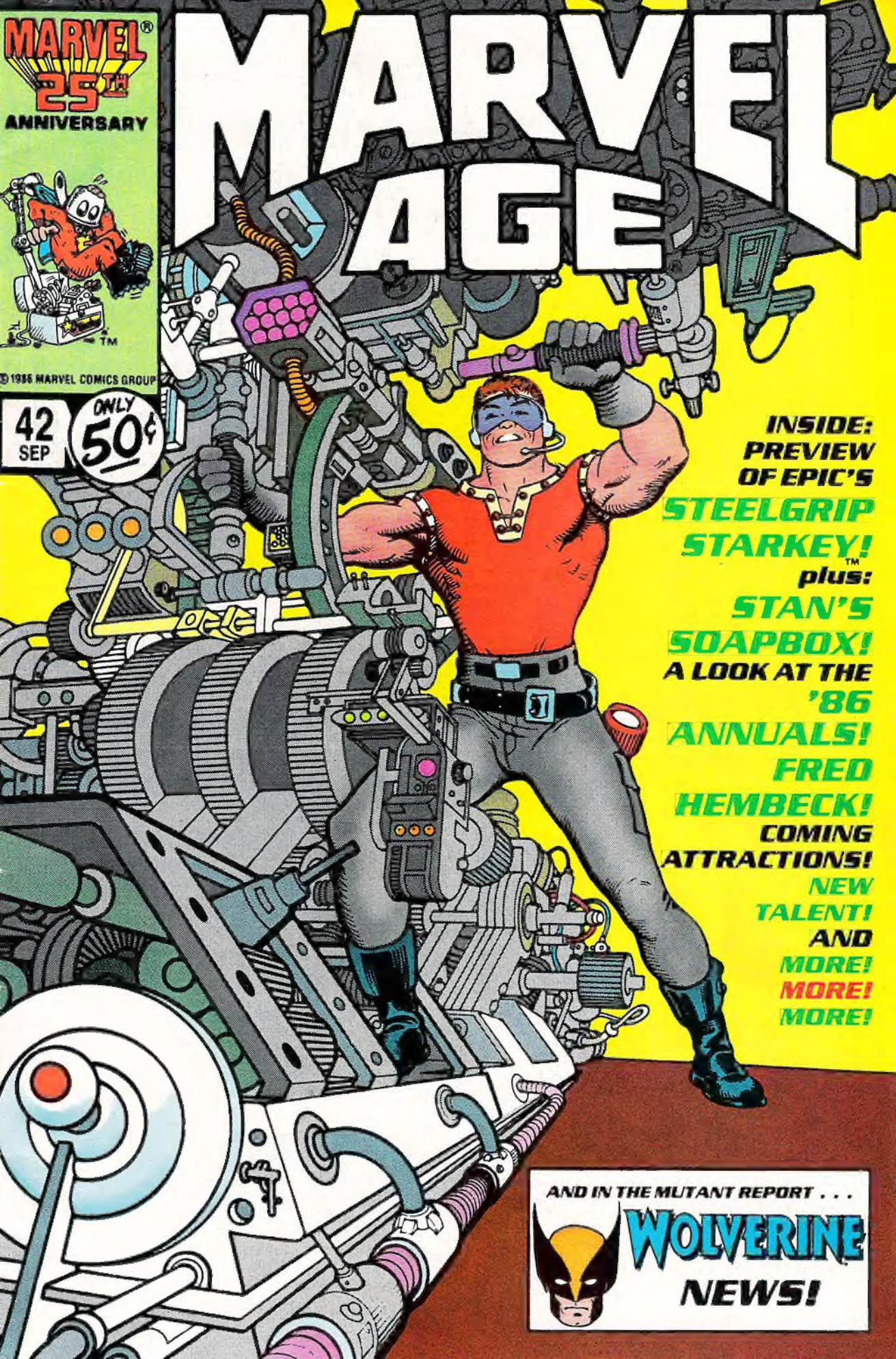
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42
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INSIDE:
PREVIEW
OF EPIC'S
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A LOOK AT THE
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AND
MORE!
MORE!
MORE!
AND IN THE MUTANT REPORT . . .
WOLVERINE
NEWS!

Stan Lee presents

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Way back in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #30, we ran the *1985 Marvel Age Summer Annuals Report Card* and promised to publish the results in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #39. Well, it took us a bit longer than we expected to tabulate all the scores, but we finally did it. Or to be more precise, Star's super assistant editor, **Nancy Brown**, finally did it all for us —mathematics was never our best subject. So at long last, here's how you scored last year's Annuals. (Note: The scores below indicate the percentage of the total votes cast. For example, 10.5% of you thought the story for the **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL** was outstanding. 15.8% thought it was good, 52.6% thought it was fair, 15.8% thought it was poor, and 5.3% thought it was awful).

1985 MARVEL AGE® SUMMER ANNUALS REPORT CARD

		OUTSTANDING	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	AWFUL
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #1	STORY	10.5	15.8	52.6	15.8	5.3
	ART	0	26.3	31.6	31.6	10.5
	OVERALL	0	47.4	31.6	15.8	5.3
SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #5	STORY	23.5	23.5	23.5	17.6	11.8
	ART	17.6	52.9	17.6	5.9	5.9
	OVERALL	11.8	41.2	35.3	11.8	0
AVENGERS #14	STORY	29.4	64.7	5.9	0	0
	ART	52.9	23.5	23.5	0	0
	OVERALL	35.3	58.8	5.9	0	0
FANTASTIC FOUR #19	STORY	29.4	52.9	11.8	5.9	0
	ART	58.8	35.3	5.9	0	0
	OVERALL	29.4	58.8	11.8	0	0
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #19	STORY	35.3	41.2	17.6	5.9	0
	ART	11.8	35.3	23.5	17.6	11.8
	OVERALL	17.6	47.1	29.4	5.9	0
HULK #14	STORY	61.5	23.1	15.4	0	0
	ART	30.1	46.2	15.4	0	0
	OVERALL	69.2	15.4	15.4	0	0
ROM #4	STORY	14.3	35.7	42.8	0	7.1
	ART	7.1	21.4	42.8	14.3	14.3
	OVERALL	7.1	50	35.7	0	7.1
THOR #13	STORY	50	37.5	6.3	6.3	0
	ART	50	50	0	0	0
	OVERALL	50	43.8	6.3	0	0
NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL #1	STORY	56.3	43.8	0	0	0
	ART	68.8	25	6.3	0	0
	OVERALL	68.8	37.3	0	0	0
X-MEN #9	STORY	60	26.7	6.7	6.7	0
	ART	80	13.3	0	6.7	0
	OVERALL	73.3	26.7	0	6.7	0
CONAN #10	STORY	11	55.5	22.2	0	11.1
	ART	22.2	55.5	22.2	0	0
	OVERALL	11.1	55.5	22.2	11.1	11.1

continued on inside back cover

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MARVEL AGE® Vol. 1, No. 42, September, 1986. (ISSN #8750-4367) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published monthly. Copyright © 1986 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 50¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate $6.00 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign, $8.00. Printed in the U.S.A. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. MARVEL AGE (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO MARVEL AGE, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 10TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Second-Class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.**

Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic and Star titles bearing an **October** cover date.

A Limited Series is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.

A Graphic Novel is a trade paperback-sized edition.

A Direct Sales title is available only at selected outlets.

Shipping Date refers to the date the comics leave the printer.

MARVEL COMING ATTRACTIONS

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Strange things are happening in **DOCTOR STRANGE**—and we mean *strange! Alpha Flight* and **the Avengers** have an undersea cross-over! Guess who is guest-starring in **TOP DOG**? And look for the debuts of **THE NAM, G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS, LABYRINTH**, a bunch of *new* annuals and a whole passel of **POPPLES**! (whew!)

And that's just a *hint* of the excitement you can expect next month! Don't take a chance of missing out on anything! Tell your comics shop owner to reserve the titles you want today!

Titles Shipping June 3
On Sale June 24

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK ANNUAL #15**—Only one mortal is totally consumed by the desire to destroy **the Hulk**, only one mortal is merciless enough to want to kill **the Hulk** with his bare hands, only one mortal is powerful enough to do exactly that—**the Abomination**! He's back from outer space and he's out for revenge! Written by **Danny Fingeroth** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. $1.25.

☐ **DAKOTA NORTH #3**—What is private-eye **Dakota North**'s 12-year-old brother doing in Europe on the famous Orient Express railroad with a sixteen-year-old female from the company that is trying to kill **Dakota**? Having fun, of course! If you think *that*'s confusing, he's also sporting a priceless fountain pen loaded with nerve gas! Want even more mystery in this thriller? **Dakota** still thinks her brother is in New York City! "Active Tense" is written by **Martha Thomases** and drawn by **Tony Salmons**. 75c.

Cobra is on the offensive in G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS!

G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS © 1986 Hasbro Bradley, Inc.

☐ **MARVEL AGE ANNUAL #2**—A look ahead at upcoming developments at Marvel, including previews of every single Marvel title, with stories and art by Marvel's finest—including such luminaries as **Steve Englehart, Roger Stern, Walt Simonson, Rick Leonardi, Al Milgrom** and **Bill Mantlo**—and even a glimpse of the New Universe! Plus, a look back at Marvel's past twenty-five years, with articles, reprints, and more—including a never-before-seen issue of **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** from the summer of 1963, previewing those great new titles, **THE AVENGERS** and **THE X-MEN**!! Direct Sales Only. 50¢.

☐ **DAREDEVIL #235**—**Daredevil**, the man without fear, goes after the child-slayer without a soul in what has to be the most searing **Daredevil** story *ever* printed! Written by **Frank Miller** and drawn by **Walter Simonson**. 75¢.

☐ **G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS #1**—What's so special about **SPECIAL MISSIONS**? First, it spotlights your favorite **Joes** in action; second it gives you twice as much hard-hitting adventure from America's greatest counter-terrorist strike force; third, it reunites the original team that made **G.I. JOE** one of Marvel's hottest-selling titles; fourth, they bring back Russia's answer to the **Joes**—**the Oktober Guard**; fifth, there's also **Cobra's** deadliest terrorist agent, **the Baroness**; sixth, there are **the Joes**, themselves: **Torpedo, Deep Six, Shipwreck** and **Cutter**! If you want more reasons than *those*, you'll find them in "That Sinking Feeling" written by **Larry Hama** and drawn by **Herb Trimpe**. 75¢.

☐ **LABYRINTH (Limited Series) #1**—It's a nightmare come true for one teen-age girl when goblins tear her baby brother from her grasp! Why do they want this particular child? What can the poor girl do to find and rescue him? The tension-filled adventure begins in this gripping **Jim Henson** fantasy movie adapted by **Sid Jacobson**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Romeo Tanghal**! 75¢.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS #44**—**The New Mutants** become mutant hunters when **Legion, Professor X's** son, destroys **Moira MacTaggart's** Mutant Research Center and vanishes into the countryside where an even greater danger awaits him—mankind! "Runaway" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Jackson Guice** and inked by **Kyle Baker**. 75¢.

☐ **MEET MISTY (Limited Series) #6**—This final issue offers three more reasons why you made Misty Marvel's teen queen of the eighties! The hijinks really become hilarious when romance gets out of hand in "Too Many Brides!" Wait until you see what's dogging **Misty** in "Dog Days!" With great power comes great responsibility, but that was before there was "Super Misty!" Plus: fashion pin-ups designed by the fans! Written and drawn by **Trina Robbins**. A Star comic. 75¢.

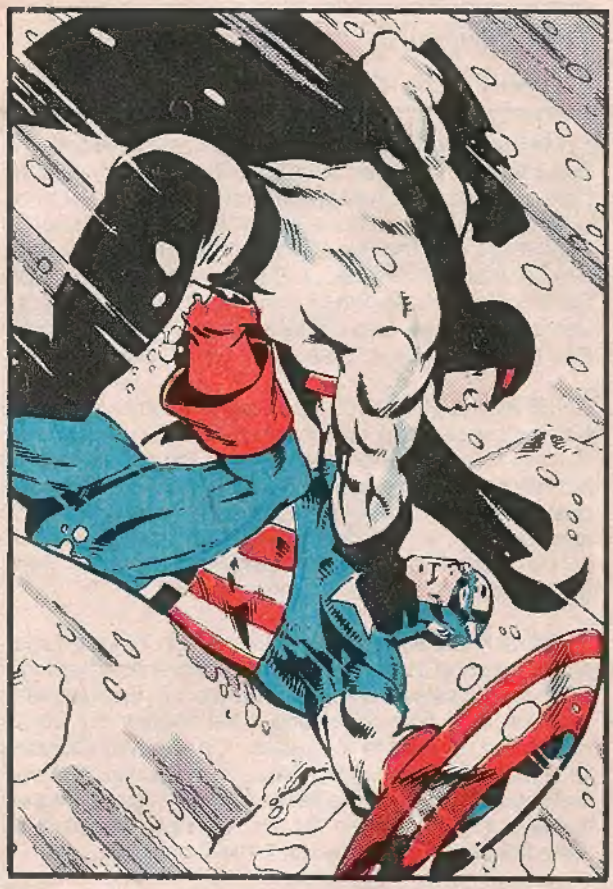
☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #19**—**Spidey** goes toe-to-toe with the *weirdest* foe he's ever faced . . . **the Humbug**! "The Humbug" is written by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **Marc Silvestri** and inked by **Kyle Baker**. 75¢.

☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS #13**—**The West Coast Avengers** face four foes even **the Avengers** would think twice about fighting, because these guys control the forces that bind the universe! "The Unified Field Theory" is written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. 75¢.

☐ **THUNDERCATS #6**—The feline heroes of Third Earth find themselves locked in their most desperate battle yet! They need more than power to save the soul of their friend, **Jaga the Wise**—they need time! And time is exactly what the merciless mutant armies of **Mumm-Ra** refuse to give! "Mumm-Ra × 3" is written by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **Jim Mooney** and inked by **Brett Breeding**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #11**—Publisher **J. Jonah Jackal** gets to choose a queen of cheese, and he takes shutter-pig **Peter Porker** and the cub reporters with him to record the cheese-shaking event for propensity—or something like that. There's a cheesy underside to the contest, and **Peter Porker** discovers it when he finds the big cheese behind the scandalous cheese smuggling! No, it's not **Groo**, though there's certainly enough cheese dip to attract him in "The Gouda, the Bad and the Ugly, or Edam and Weep" written by **Steve Mellor** and drawn by **Joe Albelo**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **IRON MAN ANNUAL #8**—What dread biological secret do the scientists of the classified **Project Pegasus**



Cap and the Flag-Smasher duke it out in an Alpine blizzard!

hope to extract from their young mutant hostage? Why must they keep their experiments hidden from **Iron Man**? Guest starring: **X-Factor**! "Grand Design" is written and penciled by **Bob Layton** and inked by **Brett Breeding**. $1.25.

☐ **MOONSHADOW** #9—Epic's unique fairy tale for adults continues as the young **Moonshadow** takes the initiative in his life after a bizarre G'L-Doses-inspired vision prompts him to search the galaxies for his profane, fur-covered friend, **Ira**. Written by **J.M. DeMatteis** and painted by **Jon J Muth**. An Epic comic. Direct Sales only. Baxter paper. For Mature Readers. $1.50.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK AND WOLVERINE** #1—If you think **Wolverine** is wild now, you should have seen him *before* he joined **the X-Men**! And now you can! We searched all the way back to **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** #'s 180 and 181 to find his first adventure! All we'll say here is that it's a doozy, for not only does **Wolverine** square off against **the Hulk**—he also has to take on the fearsome legend of the Canadian wilderness—the monster called **Wendigo**! Plus: Marvel Saga-cious **Peter Sanderson** gives the lowdown on **Wolverine's** development in "Wolverine: The Evolution of a Character." "And the Wind Howls . . . Wendigo!" and "And Now—the Wolverine!" are written by **Len Wein**, penciled by **Herb Trimpe** and inked by **Jack Abel**. 48 pages. Baxter paper. $2.00. Titles shipping **June 10**, on sale July 1.

Titles Shipping June 10
On Sale July 1

☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION** #11—No other comic book reference magazine has so many heroes, so many villains and so much information about them, their weapons and where they hang out! Not only that, but it includes up-to-date delineations of each, all done by the top Marvel artists! Inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. Written by **Mark Gruenwald** and **Peter Sanderson**. $1.50.

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #128—What was **Conan** like before he became the most feared warrior in the barbaric Hyborean Age? Part of **Conan's** shadowy past is revealed in this gripping tale in which the young **Conan** finds friendship, love, betrayal and is given "an offer he cannot refuse." "Curse of the Ageless Ones" is written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **Mike Docherty** and inked by **Fraja Bator**. Cover painting by **Doug Beekman**. A Marvel Magazine. $1.50.

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT** #39—**Alpha Flight** goes to war against the sovereign state of **Atlantis** to rescue one of their own from the merciless **Attuma**! It's a tie-in with **THE AVENGERS** #272 that will permanently change the future of both **Alpha Flight** and **the Avengers**! "To Invade Atlantis" is written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Dave Ross** and inked by **Whilce Portacio**. 75¢.

☐ **HEATHCLIFF** #11—Everyone in the Bullpen is calling this the most uproarious spoof of the month! **Heathcliff**, the world's most cat-ankerous cat, meets those two mice from paradise, **Sprocket** and **Chubbs** . . . **the Miami Mice**! "Miami Mice" is written by **Michael Gallagher**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

A tale of Groo's turbulent past in this month's GROO!

GROO THE WANDERER © 1986 Sergio Aragones. All Rights Reserved.

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #322**—Captain America's personal war against the anarchy champion, **Flagsmasher**, leads Cap straight into an Alpine ambush in "The Chasm." Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Neary** and inked by **Dennis Janke**. 75¢.

☐ **GROO THE WANDERER #20**—It's the "siege me, siege you blues" as only **Groo** can perform in this riotous resolution of the **Groo**ella epic, "The Siege, Second Try." By **Sergio Aragones**, with kibitzing by **Mark Evanier**. An Epic comic. 75¢.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #281**—The super-powered **Sinister Syndicate** has *both* **Spider-Man** and **Silver Sable** trapped on Coney Island! Who'll be left to pick up the pieces? Written by **Tom DeFalco**, layed-out by **Ron Frenz** and finished by **Brett Breeding**. 75¢.

☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE #79**—A quiet dinner between **Doctor Strange** and the woman with latent mystical powers, **Morgana Blessing**, suddenly becomes the scene of a bizarre battle of magic that forces **Morgana** to *become* **Doctor Strange**! The surprising reason why is just the first of many shocks in "Fatamorgana." Written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Chris Warner** and inked by **Randy Emberlin**. 75¢.

☐ **POWER PACK #26**—The **Power Pack**'s homecoming from the faraway Kymellian galaxy almost blows up in their faces—literally! But the worst blow of all happens when **Franklin Richards** discovers that he's been deserted by his parents, **Mr. Fantastic** and the **Invisible Woman**! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Jon Bogdanove** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 75¢.

☐ **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR #11**—For a concise, credit-filled reference to everything you ever wanted to know about what happened in the world's greatest comic magazine, this index is unbeatable! Story synopses, color cover reproductions and complete story and art credits to the classic Fantastic Four stories all in one handy volume! Compiled by **George Olshevsky**. $1.25.

Titles Shipping June 17
On Sale July 8

☐ **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #43**—As **Howard the Duck** makes his screen debut, **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** previews the comics adaptation of the web-footed wonder's movie! We also take a look at our adaptation of LABYRINTH, and the Five Guys Who Own Marvel Comics. Not to mention our usual Coming Attractions, More Coming Attractions, The Mutant Report, a Star Spotlight, Hembeck's Page, and the latest from the West Coast in Stan's Soapbox! Direct Sales Only. 50¢. Cheap.

☐ **THE AVENGERS #272**—Civil war is destroying **Prince Namor**'s undersea kingdom of Atlantis! Can **Namor** do nothing to stop the rebellion led by **Attuma**? Will even **Namor**'s fellow **Avengers** be strong enough to stop the destruction of Atlantis? A special (and we mean special) tie-in with **ALPHA FLIGHT #35**. "Assault on Atlantis" is written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Tom Palmer**. 75¢.

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #187**—In an intrigue-laden city-state court, a young heir to the throne discovers that he has countless enemies, scores of opportunistic courtiers and only one friend—the mercenary who is protecting his right to the crown, **Conan**. Will **Conan**'s influence—and powerful right arm—be enough to stop the sinister Council of the Seven from seizing the throne? "Resurrection" is written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Ernie Chan**. 75¢.

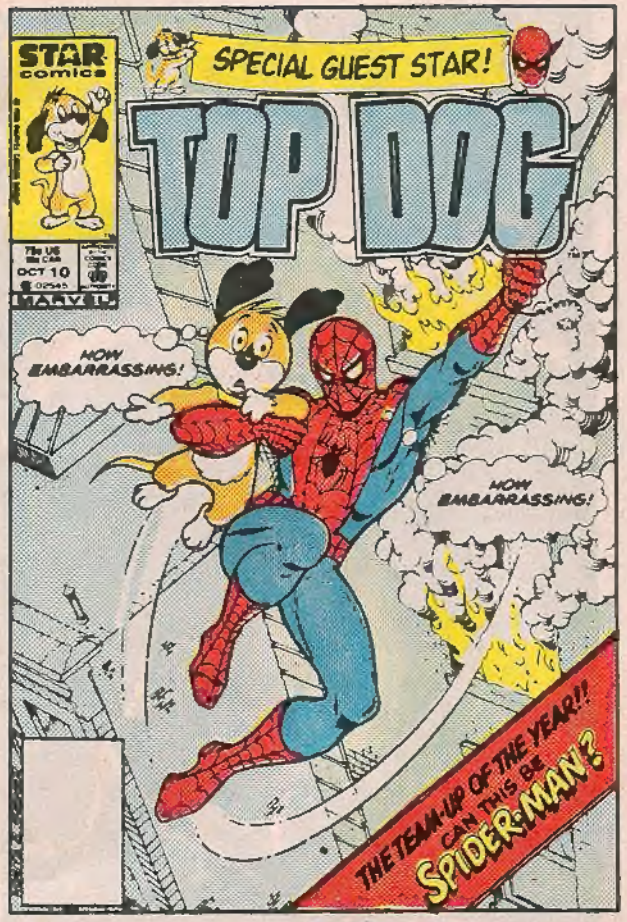
☐ **G.I. JOE #52**—**Stormshadow**, the renegade ninja neither **the Joes** nor **Cobra** could stop, returns! Plus: **Serpentor** and **Cobra Commander** become locked in a fight to the death for control of Cobra Island! "Snap Decisions" is written by **Larry Hama** and penciled by **Rod Whigham**. 75¢.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK #324**—**Bruce Banner** and **the Hulk**— together as one! But wait until you see *how* it turns out! Written and penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Dell Barras**. 75¢.

Get together with the THUNDERCATS—every issue!

THUNDERCATS © 1986 Telepictures, Inc.

THIS WHOLE *ADVENTURE* HAS BEEN HARD TO BELIEVE, LION-O!
CHEETARA'S GOT A POINT. IT WAS BAD ENOUGH WHEN LYNXANA, AN EX-THUNDERCAT-TURNED-BOUNTY-HUNTER, CAPTURED US AND TURNED US OVER TO THE MUTANTS!



It had to Happen! Top Dog meets the Amazing Spider-Man!

☐ **THE NAM** #1—**Viet Nam** the way it really was! Join **Ed Marks** and the men of the 23rd Infantry as they learn to survive in the steaming jungles of Southeast Asia. This is one war comic unlike any other because its stories are *real!* "First Patrol" is written by **Doug Murray**, penciled by **Mike Golden** and inked by **Armando Gil**.

☐ **X-MEN** #210—Is **Magneto** selling out **the X-Men** to their enemies, **the Hellfire Club**? Why else would he meet them in secret? **Nightcrawler** faces the most traumatic shock of his life at the hand of a mutant-hating gang! And **X-Factor's** career has a surprising effect on **the X-Men**! "The Morning After" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Romita Jr.** and inked by **Dan Green**. 75¢.

☐ **THE MARVEL SAGA** #11—The acclaimed linear history of the Marvel Universe reveals history in the making when **the Fantastic Four** fight a mind-boggling battle in ancient Egypt against **Rama Tut**, and meet Secret Wars' own **Molecule Man**! Meanwhile, **the X-Men's** first adventure continues, **Spidey** has his first fight with **Electro**, **Doctor Strange** takes on both **Baron Mordo** and **Nightmare** and **Iron Man** makes his first red and gold costume! That's just the start of what you can expect! Written by **Peter Sanderson** and drawn by all the Marvel greats! $1.00.

☐ **THE AVENGERS ANNUAL** #15—Someone is betraying **the Avengers** to their deadliest enemy, **Agent Gyrich** of the U.S. government! Who would dare? What lies has the traitor spread—and why? This is one suspense-filled saga so shocking it's taken *two* annuals to tell the full tale! A cross-over with **WEST COAST AVENGERS ANNUAL** #1. Written by **Danny Fingeroth**, penciled by **Steve Ditko** and inked by **Kyle Baker**. $1.25.

☐ **MARVEL TALES** #192—It was hailed as the most momentous **Spider-Man** story every! By popular demand we now re-present the two stories that changed **Spider-Man's** life forever! "The Day Gwen Stacey Died!" and "The Green Goblin's Last Stand!" reprinted from **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #'s 121 and 122. Written by **Stan Lee**, penciled by **Gil Kane** and inked by **John Romita, Sr.** 48 pages. $1.25.

☐ **PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL** #6—He's back—the enigmatic street vigilante, **Ace! Spider-Man** is out to settle the score from their battle in **PETER PARKER ANNUAL** #1. Wait until you see the surprising result of this grudge match! "Ace II" is written by **Peter David**, penciled by **Mark Beachum** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. $1.25.

☐ **DREADSTAR** #26—After so many false victories, it looks like the space forces of **the Lord High Papal** are truly about to win the inter-galactic war against their greatest foes. **Dreadstar** and his friends are about to be executed! Final Epic issue! "Execution" is written and drawn by **Jim Starlin**. Baxter Paper. Direct Sales only. $1.50.

Titles Shipping June 24
On Sale July 15

☐ **DROIDS** #4—The most *startling* team-up this month happens here when those wild robots from "Star Wars" collide with those cuddly tree-dwelling adventurers, the **Ewoks**! No one is quite sure when the trouble started or when it will end because **C-3PO**, **R2-D2** and **Wicket** and his friends have gotten themselves "Lost in Time." Written by **Dave Manak**, penciled by **John Romita Sr.** and **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Al Williamson**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **ELFQUEST** #15—The elves **Cutter** and **Skywise** find themselves wrapped up in even greater mystery and danger when their quest takes them to the place called "as deadly as a spider's web is to a fly" for humans and elves alike—the Forbidden Grove! Written by **Wendy.** and **Richard Pini**, drawn by **Wendy Pini**. An Epic comic. 75¢.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR** #295—The fate of thousands of people hangs in the balance! Can **the Fantastic Four** save Central City from oblivion? The answer is: *no!* The stunning reason why is in "Welcome to the Future" plotted by **John Byrne**, scripted by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **Jerry Ordway** and inked by **Al Gordon**. 75¢.

☐ **PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN** #119—No one is more savage than **Sabertooth**! And once he finds his quarry, **the Black Cat**, the fur is really going to fly! "Cat Fight" is written by **Peter David**, penciled by **Rich Buckler** and inked by **Bob McLeod**. 75¢.

☐ **TOP DOG** #10—They said we'd never dare do it, so we did! **Top Dog**, the world's brainiest canine, teams up with **Spider-Man**! What happens next is an off-the-wall adventure full of crime, grime and is one whale of a good time that can only be called "The Comic Book Caper!" Written by **George Caragonne**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jon D'Agostino**. A Star comic. 75¢.

☐ **THOR** #372—Why is a law officer from the future on the Earth of today? The answer is even more astonishing than the fate of **Zaniac**! Written by **Walter Simonson** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. 75¢.

☐ **CLASSIC X-MEN** #2—The old **X-Men** leave to make way for the new **X-Men** in "Doomsmith Scenario" reprinted from **X-MEN** #94, and includes 5 new pages of story. Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Dave Cockrum** and inked by **Bob McLeod**. Plus: "First Friends" a never before seen story featuring **Storm** and **Jean Grey** written by **Chris Claremont** and drawn by **John Bolton**. 32 pages. $1.00.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL** #2—**Mojo** and **Spiral** are the most diabolical villains their galaxy produced. Now they're running wild on Earth using a television show to lure children into their clutches! When they catch the **New Mutants** in their hypnotic stares, the ratings go through the roof—along with half of Manhattan! Written by **Chris Claremont** and drawn by **Alan Davis**. $1.25.

☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS ANNUAL** #1—The searing tale begun in **THE AVENGERS ANNUAL** #15 concludes here! The traitor stands revealed! But not even both the **Avengers** and **West Coast Avengers** are prepared for the scope of the former **Avenger's** treachery! Written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Mark Bright** and inked by **Paul Ryan**. $1.25.

☐ **ALIEN LEGION** #15—**Jugger Grimrod** is the victim of an intergalactic mob rub-out as the lethal legionnaire's past finally catches up with him. Written by **Alan Zelenetz**, penciled by **Larry Stroman** and inked by **Randy Emberlin**. Baxter paper. Direct Sales Only. $1.50.

☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS** #21—The evil **Decepticons** plan to destroy the Hoover Dam and neither human nor **Autobot** can stop them! But not even the **Decepticons** are prepared for the amazing **Aerialbots**! "Aerialbots over America" is written by **Bob Budiansky**, penciled by **Don Perlin** and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. 75¢.

☐ **IRON MAN** #211—**The Living Laser** is back and he's more than one **Iron Man** can handle! Only **Iron Man's** friend, **Rhodey**, has the power to help the armored Avenger! The question is ... will he? Plus: **Bethany Cabe's** traumatic personal struggle finally ends! "The Return of the Living Laser" is written by **Howard Mackie**, penciled by **Alex Saviuk** and inked by **Sam de la Rosa**. 75¢.

☐ **STEELGRIP STARKEY** (Limited Series) #2—The world's hardest-working hero, **Steelgrip Starkey**, supports a U.N. movement! Wait until you see where he moves it! Plus: **Flyin' Ryan's** secret is revealed! The conclusion of "Working Man's Myth" is written by and penciled by **Alan Weiss** and inked by **James Sherman**. An Epic comic. Direct sales only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

☐ **POPPLES** #1—Hang onto your hat! The wildest stars at Star Comics, those amazing, transforming toy and TV stars, **the Popples**, are here—and how! If you thought New York City was an insane place, wait until you see what happens when these furry pop-alongs mix magic and mayhem in the craziest urban spy chase this side of **Indiana Jones**! "Pop Go the Spies" is written by **Stan Kay**, penciled by **John Costanza** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star comic. 75¢.

A portrait of Storm, by John Bolton—in CLASSIC X-MEN #2!

☐ **X-FACTOR** #9—**Freedom Force** is out to get the young mutant, **Rusty**, and **X-Factor** is out to get everybody in this soul-searing adventure that plunges everyone into the depths of the **Morlock** Tunnels . . . and to their doom! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Terry Shoemaker** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. 75¢.

☐ **HUGGA BUNCH** #2—Everyone knows **the Hugga Bunch** is cool and cuddly, but this time it looks like their desire to do a good deed will chill them out completely! **The Hugga Bunch** travels through a terrible land of ice and snow to rescue a magic princess and somehow show two of the coldest people in the world the way to a warm heart. "The Ice Princess of the Magic Palace" is written by **Stan Kay**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here comes a Popple—from Star Comics!

Popples © 1986 Mattel, Inc. All rights reserved.

Titles Shipping July

CLOAK AND DAGGER #9—by Mantlo, Leonardi and Austin.
DAREDEVIL #236—by Miller and W. Simonson.
MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE #4—by Carlin, Wilson and Janke.
LABYRINTH #2—by Jacobson, J. Buscema and Tanghal.
THE NEW MUTANTS #45—by Claremont, Guice and Baker.
PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #12—by Mellor and Albelo.
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #20—by Michelinie, Silvestri and Baker.
WEST COAST AVENGERS #14—by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
CONAN THE KING #37—by Kraar, Hunt and Williamson.
SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #9—by Mantlo, Isherwood and Villamonte.
ALPHA FLIGHT #40—by Mantlo, Ross and Portacio.
CAPTAIN AMERICA #323—by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.
EWOKS #10—by Manak, Kremer and D'Agostino.
GROO THE WANDERER #21—by Aragonés with Evanier.
HEATHCLIFF #12—by DeCesare, Kremer and Roettcher.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #282—by DeFalco, Frenz and Breeding.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR #12—compiled by Olshevsky.
BOZZ CHRONICLES #5—by Michelinie and Blevins.
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #12—by Sanderson and Gruenwald.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #129—by Owsley, Kwapisz and Chan.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #44
THE AVENGERS #273—by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #188—by Owsley, J. Buscema and Chan.
G.I. JOE #53—by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #325—by Milgrom.
MARVEL TALES #193—by Claremont, Byrne and Hunt.
MUPPET BABIES #10—by Kay and Severin.
THE NAM #2—by Murray, Golden and Gil.
X-MEN #211—by Claremont, Romita Jr. and Green.
THE MARVEL SAGA #12—by Sanderson.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #20—by DeFalco, Beachum, and Wiacek.
ELEKTRA #1—by Miller and Sienkiewicz.
MARVEL FANFARE #29
CARE BEARS #7—by Post and Edelman.
ELFQUEST #16—by W. and R. Pini.
IRON MAN #212—by Fingeroth, Turner and Williams.
MADBALLS #3—by Jacobs, Post and Edelman.
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #120
THOR #373—by W. Simonson and S. Buscema.
THE TRANSFORMERS #22—by Budiansky, Perlin, Akin and Garvey.
X-FACTOR #10—by L. Simonson, W. Simonson and Rubinstein.
CLASSIC X-MEN #3—by Claremont, Cockrum and McLeod.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO MARVEL TEAM-UP #6—compiled by Olshevsky.
FANTASTIC FOUR #296—by Stern, Ordway and Gordon.
SAVAGE TALES #7
STEELGRIP STARKEY #3—by Weiss and Sherman.

Titles Shipping August

DAKOTA NORTH #4—by Thomases and Salmons.
DAREDEVIL #237—by Englehart.
G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS #2—Hama and Trimpe.
LABYRINTH #3—by Jacobson, J. Buscema and Tanghal.
THE NEW MUTANTS #46—by Claremont, Guice and Baker.
THUNDERCATS #7—by Conway, Mooney and Breeding.
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #21—by Michelinie, Silvestri and Baker.
WEST COAST AVENGERS #15—by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
MOONSHADOW #10—by DeMatteis and Muth.
ALPHA FLIGHT #41—by Mantlo, Ross and Portacio.
CAPTAIN AMERICA #324—by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.
DOCTOR STRANGE #80—by Gillis, Warner and Emberlin.
GROO THE WANDERER #22—by Aragonés with Evanier.
HEATHCLIFF #13—by Gallagher, Kremer and Roettcher.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #283—by DeFalco, Frenz and Breeding.
THE TRANSFORMERS MOVIE #1—by Macchio, Perlin, Akin and Garvey.
POWER PACK #27—by L. Simonson, Bogdanove and Wiacek.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #130—by Owsley, Kwapisz and Chan.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #45
THE AVENGERS #274—by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #189—by Owsley, J. Buscema and Camp.
FRAGGLE ROCK #11—by Kay and Severin.
G.I. JOE #54—by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #326—by Milgrom.
MARVEL TALES #194—by Claremont, Byrne and Hunt.
THE NAM #3—by Murray, Golden and Gil.
X-MEN #212—by Claremont, Romita Jr. and Green.
THE MARVEL SAGA #13—by Sanderson.
ELEKTRA #2—by Miller and Sienkiewicz.
DROIDS #5—by Manak and Romita Sr.
ELFQUEST #17—by W. and R. Pini.
FANTASTIC FOUR #297—by Stern and J. Buscema.
IRON MAN #213—by Michelinie.
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #121
THOR #374—by W. Simonson and S. Buscema.
TOP DOG #11—by Jacobson, Kremer and Roettcher.
THE TRANSFORMERS #23—by Budiansky, Perlin, Akin and Garvey.
X-FACTOR #11—by L. Simonson, W. Simonson and Rubinstein.
THE CLASSIC X-MEN #4—by Claremont, Cockrum and McLeod.
ALIEN LEGION #16—by Zelenetz, Stroman and Emberlin.
STEELGRIP STARKEY #4—by Weiss, Mayerik and Sherman.

NEWSWATCH

LOOK OUT FOR THE LATEST EYE-POPPIN' POSTERS HOT OFF THE MARVEL PRESS!

ITEM: Poster pandemonium is reaching a fever pitch in the Marvel Press office of editor **Bob Budiansky**! Coming to your favorite comics shop any day now will be four new full-color posters! Just wait until you see how SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN cover artist **Joe Jusko** has rendered THOR! **Keith Pollard** and **Durwood Coffey** have created a sensational SILVER SURFER! Mutant maniacs and collectors everywhere were so knocked out by the cover of X-FACTOR #1 that they demanded we turn it into a poster. So we did! But wait until you see poster #4! It's a classic penciled by **Rick Leonardi** and inked by **Terry Austin** of perhaps the most popular mutant ever, PHOENIX!

All posters are a large 22" × 34" printed on high-quality, heavy paper and are priced at a mere $3.95. And as we said earlier, they'll be at your favorite comics shop before you know it.

THE TOP TEN

It's time once again for the Marvel Top Ten! The Top Ten is a listing of the ten best selling Direct Sales titles, as provided by our pal Carol Kalish, Director of Specialty Sales. This is a list for March . . .

1—X-MEN #207
2—X-FACTOR #6
3—MARVEL UNIVERSE #8
4—ALPHA FLIGHT #36
5—FANTASTIC FOUR #292
6—NEW MUTANTS #41
7—WEST COAST AVENGERS #10
8—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #16
9—DAREDEVIL #232
10—AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #278

Looks like a pretty mixed group this time out—team books, solo stars, mutant books, not to mention MARVEL UNIVERSE!—*A.P.*

BULLPEN BIRTHDAYS

BULLPEN BIRTHDAYS

June 2	Dwight Jon Zimmerman
June 4	Joe Rubinstein
June 7	Larry Hama
June 8	Mike Higgins
June 10	Charles Vess
June 15	Brent Anderson
June 18	Mark Gruenwald
June 22	Armando Gil
June 26	Tom DeFalco
June 26	Warren Kremer
June 27	Jackson Guice
June 30	Jim Owsley
June 30	Phil Lord

X-TRA THE MUTANT REPORT X-TRA

VOLUME 2 "THE NEXT STEP IN NEWS EVOLUTION" NUMBER 1

THE VERY FIRST WOLVERINE™ STORY

Wolverine. The name conjures images of the mutant warrior, the mysterious Canadian also known as Logan. He has become one of Marvel's most popular characters, a member of one of the most popular super teams. But it wasn't always that easy.

The upcoming THE INCREDIBLE HULK AND WOLVERINE Special Edition will re-present the very first appearance of the fast-healing mutant with the adamantium claws. The super-sized package is bursting with extras, but it all begins with a beautiful wraparound cover pencilled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Jack Abel**. That alone is well worth the cover price, but—you guessed it!—there's much more.

Edited by **Jim Salicrup**, the package gets its name from the main story. From the pages of THE INCREDIBLE HULK #180 and 181 come "And the Wind Howls ... Wendigo!" and "And Now ... the Wolverine!," combining to feature the debut of Wolverine. What a way to begin a career battling both the **Hulk** and **Wendigo**!

The tale is written by one of the creators of the new X-Men, **Len Wein**, with art by **Herb Trimpe** and Jack Abel. It's the story of the Hulk's visit to Canada, where concerned officials decide to mobilize the mysterious Weapon X to contain Ol' Greenskin from wreaking havoc and destruction on the beautiful north. But before that the Hulk is involved in some supernatural goings on with the cursed Wendigo!

The Wendigo is a beast that inhabits the body of those that eat human flesh. It is a curse, a savage horror, and the Hulk had fought him once before. And fight they do again! And just as their powerful battle threatens to bring the entire northern woods down upon their heads we'll finally meet Weapon X,

the Wolverine!

We'll leave the outcome of this three-way confrontation a surprise and tell you what else is in this special package. There's a back-up story featuring Wolverine and Hercules that's written by **Jo Duffy** and penciled by **Ken Landgraf**. Oh, yes, it's inked by a gentleman named **George Perez**. Always eager to bestow "The Gift," Hercules and Wolverine get into what is commonly called a barroom brawl. Lots of things usually break at such affairs but, again, we don't want to spoil the ending.

The book will also feature the original covers from THE INCREDIBLE HULK #180 and 181. And the entire package is topped off with an article by MARVEL UNIVERSE researcher and MARVEL SAGA writer **Peter Sanderson**. "Wolverine. The Evolution of a Character" examines the mutant from the behind-the-scenes development prior to his first appearance in 1974 to his joining the new X-Men in 1975 to his portrayal today. As an extra bonus, you'll get to see for the very first time **John Romita's** original Wolverine character designs. In the 12 years since these Hulk stories there has been a lot of growth and a lot of change. This special package takes us back to where it all began and is a must for new fans and even for those of us who were there in the beginning.

It's Genetic

by **Kyle Baker**

When riding the subway at rush hour, Jason Wyngarde, a.k.a. Mastermind, enjoys using his power to make people believe that he is William "The Refrigerator" Perry.

MUTANT WATCH

There's something developing in the mutant-related books. Everyone is being secretive and smiling a lot around the mutant offices, so you can be sure that something very special is being planned. But nobody is talking ... yet. All we found out is that there is going to be some kind of war and it all starts in X-MEN #21. This issue is also the mutant anniversary story for Marvel's 25th year. It's a massacre story and it involves **the Morlocks**. It all starts here, but watch other mutant series as the repercussions will be far-reaching.

Speaking of repercussions, NEW MUTANTS #45 will take a look at the effects of the things happening in X-FACTOR. It's also an anniversary story and it's called "Get The Mutie!" It's a kid's game gone bad and it's not a pretty sight.

The Mutant Report took a few moments to chat with new X-FACTOR writer **Louise Simonson** to find out what plans she had for the series. But first we had to find out how she felt about writing the adventures of characters she used to edit. "At least I know who these characters are and I'm enjoying myself." It turns out she's in on the secret and, of course, she couldn't tell us about it. But it will be featured in all the mutant books.

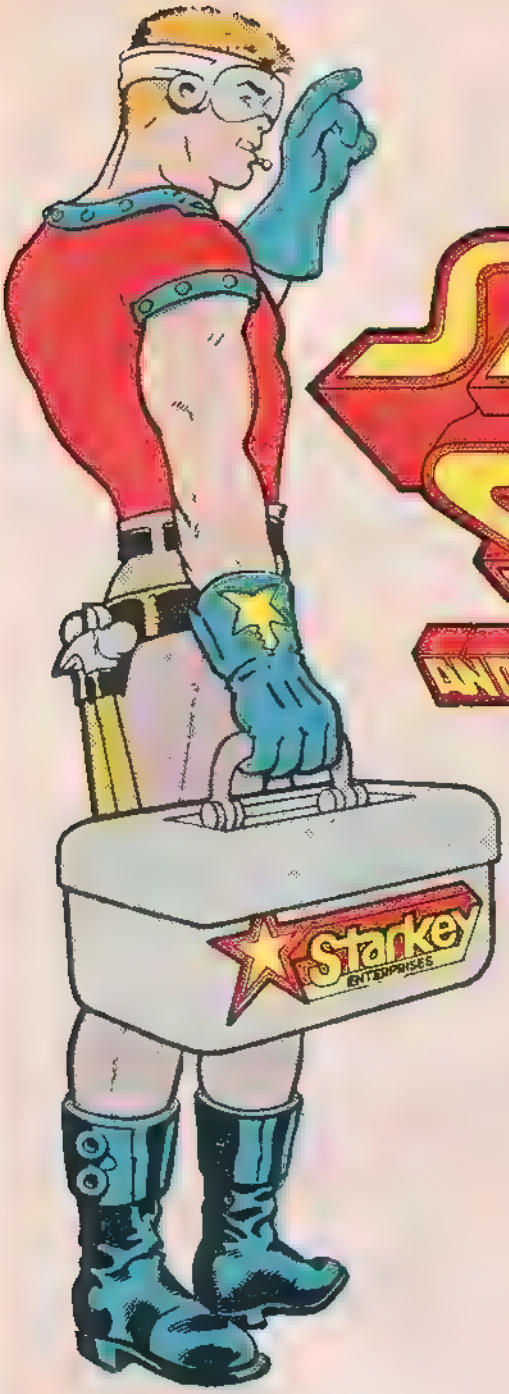
X-FACTOR #10 will also feature the Morlocks, as they attempt to rescue their girl **Skids** from X-Factor. Skids may be developing into a major character here and in X-MEN. We'll have more details as they become available. But the main focus of the issue will be fights and explosions. It's called "Boom Boom" and will also feature the character from SECRET WARS, the girl called **Boom Boom**. There's going to be lots of things blowing up. Like **Jean's** sister's house. With Jean in it. Boom boom! There goes part of the X-Factor complex. Boom boom!

There will also be some surprising developments involving **Artie**, and we'll be seeing a major villainous force in the character called **Apocalypse**! Things are beginning to move in X-FACTOR. Stay around for the ride.

And POWER PACK will be getting in on all the fun, too. Issue #27 will be an X-FACTOR crossover concerning the destruction of ... oops, that would be telling! Don't you just love secrets? See you next month with a few more.

MUTANT ANNUALS

This year's annuals are shaping up nicely and are promising to be very special events, as well as somewhat different. THE NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL will be drawn by **Alan Davis** and the X-MEN ANNUAL will be penciled by **Art Adams** and inked by **Terry Austin**. Both are being written by **Chris Claremont**, and he's cooked up related stories featuring the villains from the LONGSHOT Limited Series, **Mojo** and **Spiral**. They are lighthearted, somewhat silly stories that are a departure from the norm. It all begins with the NEW MUTANTS, guest-starring **Captain Britain**! Then in X-MEN, the team is captured and turned into ... **the Uncanny X-Babies**! I wouldn't miss these annuals if I were you... *—Bill Slavicsek*



STEELGRIP STARKEY

AND THE ALL-PURPOSE POWER TOOL

THE MAKING OF A MODERN MYTH

STEELGRIP STARKEY ™ and © 1986 Alan Weiss

An earthquake is threatening to destroy half of South America! A runaway satellite is on a crash course for a major midwestern city! A new building has to go up in downtown Manhattan! And all this has to be handled before lunch! That can only mean that it's time to call **Steelgrip Starkey**, America's hardest working hero!

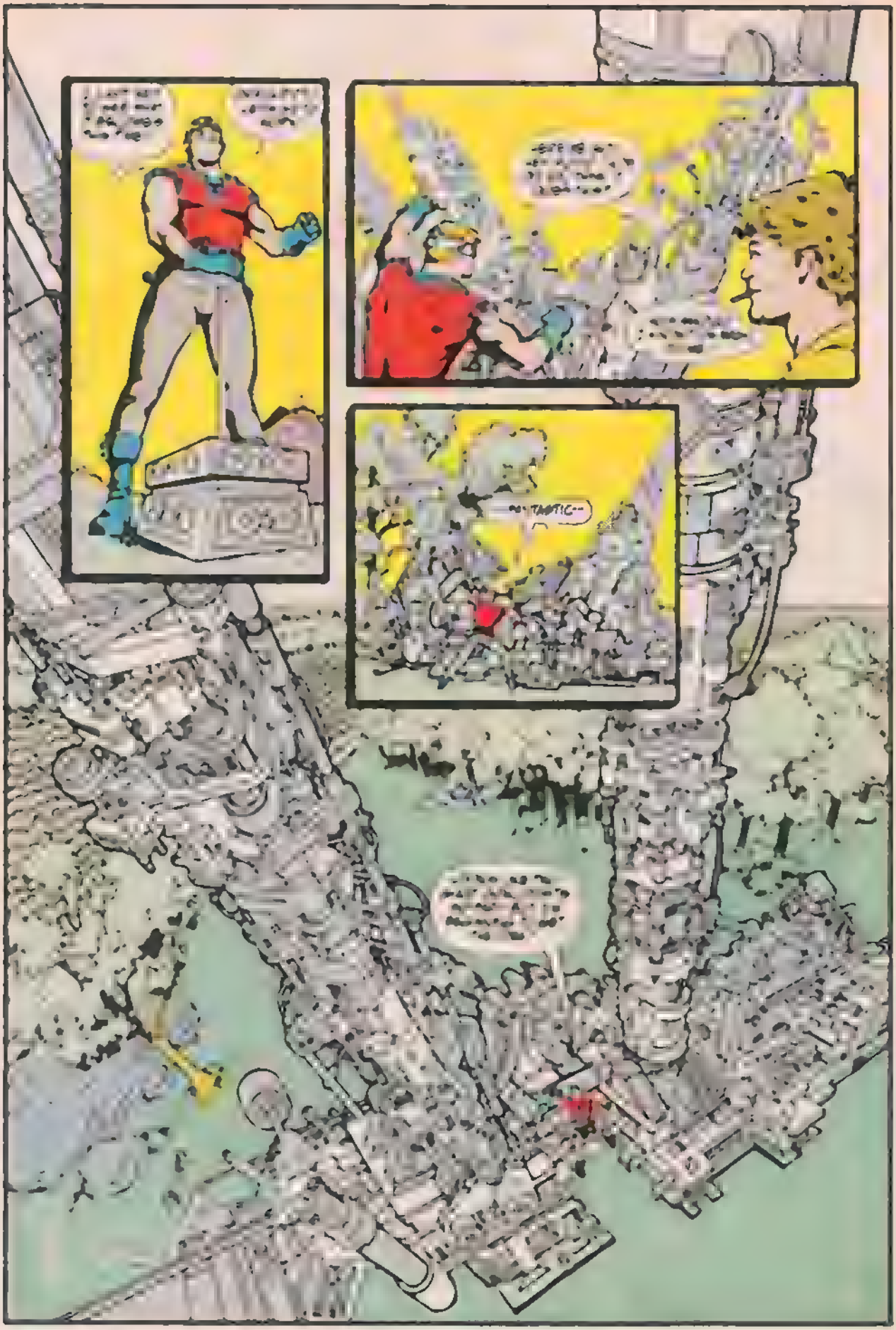
Coming from the Epic Comics line, STEELGRIP STARKEY AND THE ALL-PURPOSE POWER TOOL is a modern day myth in the making. Written, drawn and created by **Alan Weiss**, STEELGRIP is an adventure series that he describes as "modern folklore." And it *is* definitely different!

Patrick "Steelgrip" Starkey is basically a technological **John Henry** or **Paul Bunyan**-type personage. "He's not a super hero, he's not a cop, he's not a killer," explained Al. "He's just a man out to do a job, to prove that a good man with the proper tools can work miracles."

And Steelgrip certainly has the proper tools. He has the amazing All-Purpose Power Tool that provides some of the most spectacular imagery ever to grace an illustrated page. "In essence, Steelgrip's super power is this tool," said Al. "It provides us with a positive blend of humanity and technology . . . Steelgrip is a guy with a tool that operates under a technology that's so far advanced it's almost magic."

Set in contemporary times, STEELGRIP STARKEY is an adventure series that is a bold departure from much of what is seen in comics today. The six issue Limited Series is not only fun and different, it also promises to have exciting visuals and fantastic art.

"Some super powered heroes will do something along the lines of re-


-TASTIC--

pairing a dam while on their way to capture a super villain," said Al. "Starkey's whole purpose, on the other hand, is the job itself." The series will not be lacking in suspense, though. "The suspense won't necessarily come from the fighting-the-bad-guy angle. But there will be just as much tension because Steelgrip is just a regular guy and if the mountain falls on him, he's dead. If his air runs out while he's working undersea, that's it."

Steelgrip Starkey himself will be exciting to look at. Alan put a lot of thought and care into designing the Steelgrip image. "He wears a bright red shirt that has rivets at the shoulders, grey work pants, and work boots that have just a touch of the science fiction element. He has a visor that is complete with earphones, protective goggles, and a microphone pod. And at his waist, slung like a holster, is a workbelt full of tools. Instead of weapons, Steelgrip carries a flashlight, a wrench, a couple of screwdrivers, and a hammer," he said

But the magic of STEELGRIP STARKEY is the All-Purpose Power Tool. It comes in its own tool box and is a wonderful cross between magic and technology. "The nice thing about the tool is that it builds right before your eyes," explained Al. "It's always the same shape when it first comes out of the tool box. It looks like an anvil with attachments. The tool box itself has a computer screen and keyboard. The tool is then programmed to do a particular job and when Steelgrip grabs the handle it begins to grow."

Like the readers, Steelgrip never knows what the tool will look like when it's finished growing and building itself. He only knows that it will be able to do the job at hand. Right before your eyes, in stunning visuals, the tool gets bigger and more complex until it's huge. Then it returns to the tool box when the job is done. "It unbuilds, like a film running backwards, and then Steelgrip can carry it to the next job," said Al

Steelgrip is part of Star Key Enterprises. One of the unique things to look for in the first issue is the fold-out brochure that is actually an advertisement for the company. "The brochure explains who they are, what they can do, and how to contact them if you want to hire the All-Purpose PowerTool," said Al. "The address will be a post office box that will also serve as our letters page address."

Al is writing the entire series and penciling issues one, two and six. **Val Mayerik** is drawing issues four and five, and **Jim Sherman** is handling number three. Jim is also inking and coloring the entire Limited Series.

"Everyone saw what I did with issue one before they began their issues," said Al. "That set the tone for what followed. Val is doing some of his finest work for the series. He loosened up and had fun with it. And Jim will add the integrating element that should make all of the issues look like part of a whole. That was the plan from the beginning."

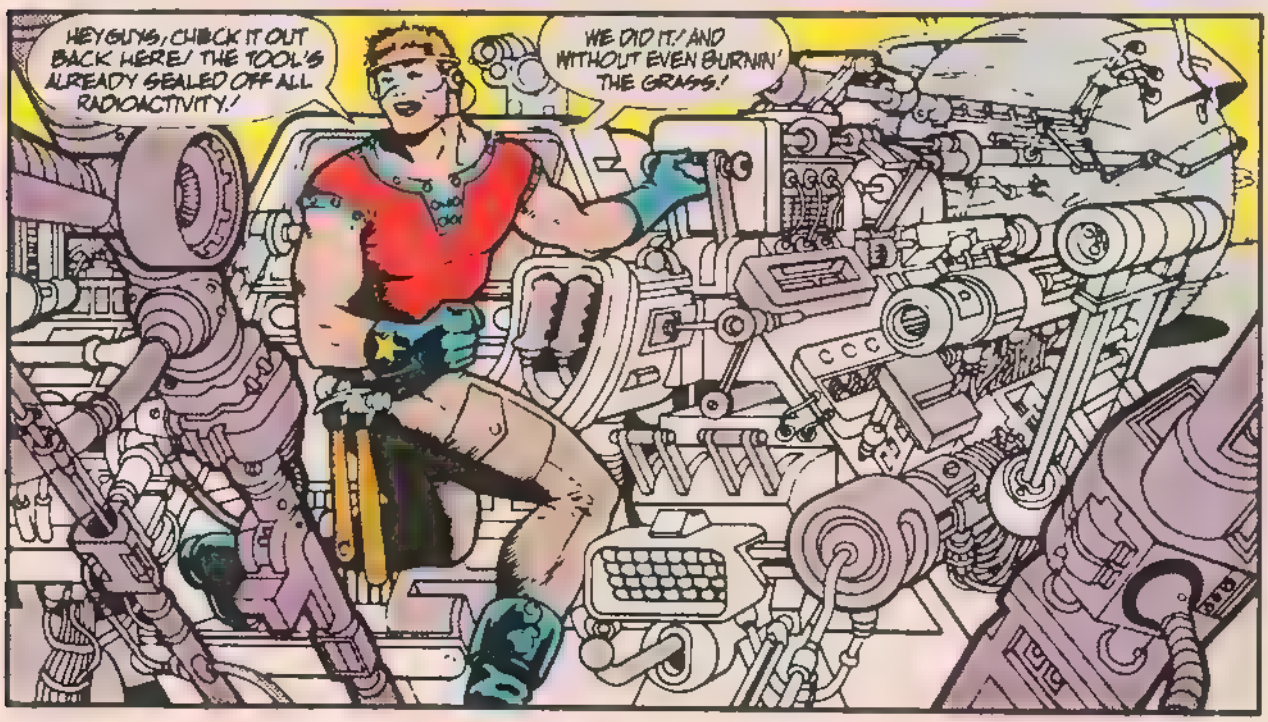
Al and Jim have worked together in the advertising field for about four years now, and have done some previous work together for Marvel as well. "We can mix and match our talents, so it works out well," said Al.

Besides Patrick "Steelgrip" Starkey, Star Key Enterprises is made up of **Sherry**, who programs the tool, and **Flyin' Ryan**, the driver, arranger, wheeler-dealer sidekick. Steelgrip is the tool wielder and Ryan is sort of a big brother image for him.

While not crime fighters, Star Key Enterprises do rescue, salvage and handle big jobs that need to be done quickly. Some of the things they will be involved in during the series include trying to prevent an earthquake, mining the moon, and stopping a runaway meteor.

"We will explore many different elements over the six issues," said Al. "We'll be under the ocean, in outer space, in the snow of Alaska, and we'll even deal with some nuclear nonsense. And one issue will be a real rip-roaring folklore issue on the scale of John Henry's legendary race This will be an around the world construction race between Steelgrip and a sort of negative version of him.

"Steelgrip is an example of a guy who is heroic because he does his work artistically," explained Al. "His work is his life." Steelgrip is a construction worker by choice. He's a college graduate who just prefers to work outdoors. "We're portraying your work as your art and also as your adventure. After all, work is a time of your life that you are spending anyhow, so you may as well make as high and as positive a choice as possible. Steelgrip has done that and uses it as an artistic expression," he said

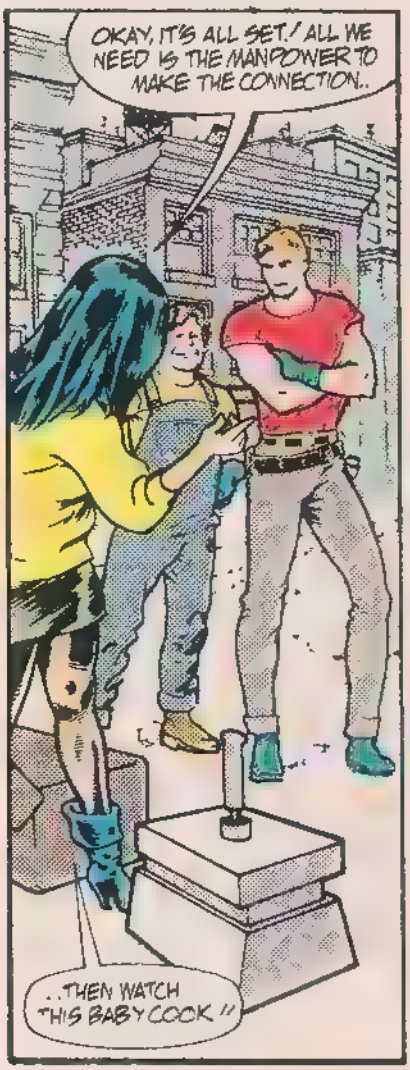

HEY GUYS, CHECK IT OUT BACK HERE! THE TOOL'S ALREADY SEALED OFF ALL RADIOACTIVITY!
WE DID IT! AND WITHOUT EVEN BURNIN' THE GRASS!

Al hopes that STEELGRIP STARKEY has some of the flavor of the old adventure comics that were involved with the challenges of the unknown and with natural menaces. "I'm hoping that the series also has some of the spirit of THE SPIRIT or of POPEYE, a spirit which was so right for its own universe."

Steelgrip is definitely an All-American hero who is right for this time and age. Al makes it clear that while he's not a super patriotic flag waver, he is an American. "The old pride-in-your-work ethic is very much in evidence," he said. "The Power Tool allows him to work on a scale that is much more heroic and approaches the stuff of folklore and legend."

The All-Purpose Power Tool is the closest thing to a super power that Steelgrip has. When he's in contact with it he has a little more resistance to temperature, gains a little more endurance, heals a little faster. The tool will only work for him and he needs to have the right intent in mind.

"That's my link with the King Arthur legends. Steelgrip has to feel that the job is right for the tool to work," explained Al. "By the same token, he can never use the tool selfishly. It has its own built in safeguards."



There is also an underlying mystery running through the six issues. It takes the form of two mysterious characters whom we won't find out completely about until all six issues have run their course. They are Mr. Pilgrim, the inventor of the power tool and the man funding Star Key Enterprises, and his strange companion known only as "his analyst."

"I wanted to come up with a character who would be reminiscent of the Jack Kirby style but wouldn't have to rely on villains in order to have a story. I wanted someone who could try to save a city from an earthquake. Steelgrip Starkey and the All-Purpose Power Tool provide a lot of wish fulfillment. He does things we'd really like to be able to do. If you had a tool that could take care of something like an oil slick in about two hours, that would be something special. Well, Steelgrip has one and can do something about it," said Al.

Each problem that Steelgrip and his friends face must be solved in a different way and the tool takes on a different shape and size each time. "It doesn't have to always be gigantic. We're going for variety and for that kind of tension that results from the size and speed at which they have to work," he said.

While some people may have the misconception that STEELGRIP STARKEY is just a construction series, the first issue will quickly dispel such illusions. "When people see the first cover they're going to see that this series has a very evident science fiction element," explained Al. "I went completely bananas drawing these tools and the visuals as the tool grows and changes is the difference."

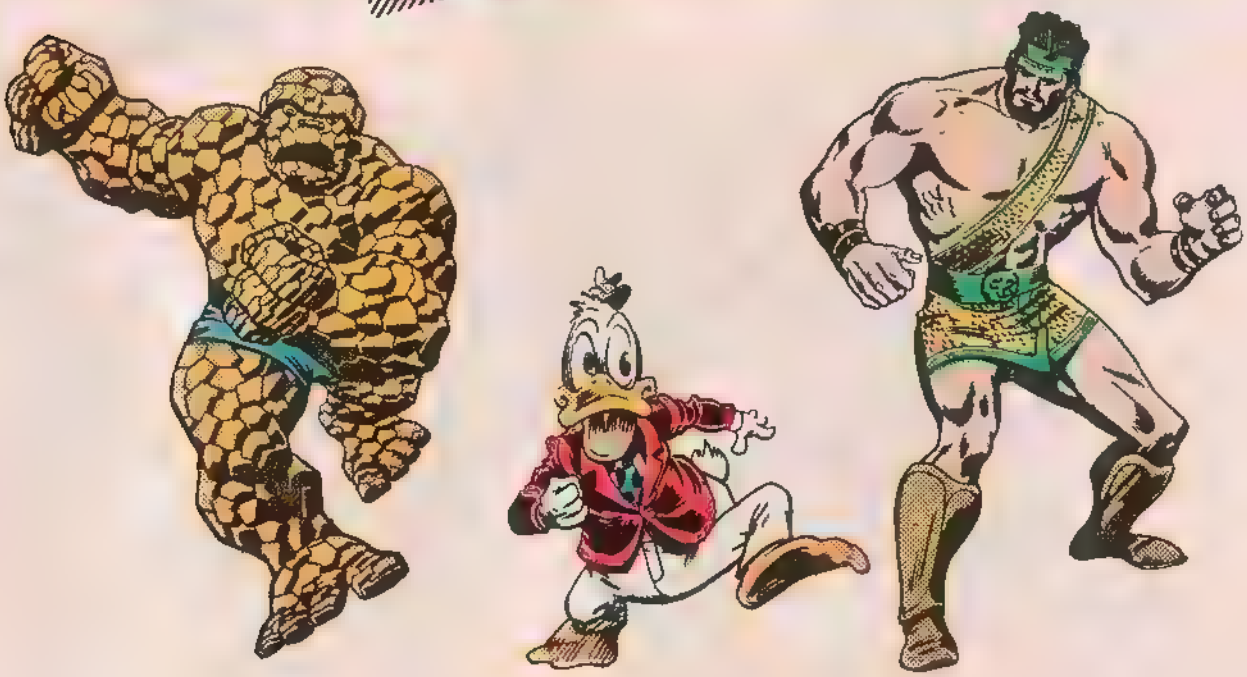
Al and everyone connected with the series are very excited about it. "STEELGRIP is the kind of book that should appeal to just about everybody. Whether you're a first time comic buyer, or you know the continuity of Marvel for the last 20 years, you will find it a unique series that stands by itself and feels good. It's just right for its own genre," said Al.

Instead of beat-the-bad-guy, STEELGRIP STARKEY AND THE ALL-PURPOSE POWER TOOL is beat-the-clock, beat-the-mountain, beat-the-natural-force. It's a positive view of technology as an extension of humanity and creativity. And most of all, it's modern day folklore. It's a myth in the making.

So if you need to change the course of a mighty river, stop a falling hunk of space debris, or repair a dam before the city floods, get in touch with Star Key Enterprises. It's all in a day's work for a regular guy like Steelgrip Starkey!

—Bill Skovicsek

STAN'S SOAPBOX



Welcome back, O Keepers of the Faith!

Just when you thought it was safe to return to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, here I am with another column for you! Well, that'll teach ya to buy the first magazine you see!

By now, you've probably all heard that Marvel's own **Howard The Duck** will be the next **George Lucas** bombshell to take the country by storm! Yep, everyone's favorite web-footed, bad-tempered, cigar-chompin' member of the family Anatidae is expected to be one of the most sensational screen hits of the year. (Don't let that "family Anatidae" throw you. I happened to stumble across it in the dictionary. It just means a bunch'a ducks!)

Then, after Hysterical Howie has been unleashed, we've got another two features almost ready to start shooting. Tell you about 'em next ish. As you can see, I'll resort to any sneaky device to make sure you return!

And now, it's philosophy time. When I asked our ebullient editor, **Slim-Jim Salicrup**, what he'd like me to write about in these first few scintillatin's Soapboxes, he suggested the theme "The Role of the Super Hero in America, Yesterday and Today!" Wow, was I impressed! It sounds like you oughtta get college credits just for reading it!

Well, anything to make ye editor happy. So let's give it a try.

Y'know, super-herodom isn't anything new. You can go all the way back to **Samson**, **Hercules** and **Ulysses**. Then there was **El Cid**, **Robin Hood**, **Zorro**, not to mention the redoubtable **Irving Forbush**. But comic-book heroes are a breed apart!

During World War Two, in the early forties, we had super heroes like **Captain America**, **Sub-Mariner** and **the Human Torch** valiantly fighting the Nazi bad guys. (Don't hold your breath waiting for me to mention any of our competitor's costumed cut-ups; they can write their own soapboxes!)

Then, in the fifties, our mixed-up Marvel merrymakers spent most of their time fighting a whole kaboodle of assorted monsters and super-duper crime lords. Of course, we were also zinging rustlers and gunslingers in our Westerns, but we never really considered our cowboy classics as super hero yarns.

Finally, along came the sixties! I'll pause for a moment till the applause dies down. That's when your benevolent Bullpen bestowed upon thee the likes of **The Fantastic Four**, **Spidey**, **Ol' Green-Skin**, **Doc Strange**, **Professor X** and his **Mutie Misfits**, and all the rest of the new breed of heroes that were destined to stand the comic-book world on its ear and make mighty Marvel the biggest name since Gorgonzola!

Yep, in the sixties, right until the present day, comic-book characters became more real, more three dimensional. They agonized, they soliloquized, they had personal problems and hang-ups, just like you and me. Well, just like you, maybe. I don't wanna shatter my public image!

But what comes next? What about the still newer breed of super heroes being created by **Jolly Jim Shooter** and his burgeoning bevy of Bullpen bandits? What does the future hold for tomorrow's headliners?

Hey, I'm not gonna play all my cards at once! I'll tell ya next ish!

So, till then, whatever you do, wherever you go, think Marvel! It's better than an ingrown toenail!

Excelsior!

Stan

THE GREATEST MARVEL ANNUAL OF THEM ALL:
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL# 1
1964
OH WHAT A BOOK! 72
SPIDEY, ONLY TO BE HU
TIME; THE KIDNAPPIN
PAGES BUT THERE'S N
CHARMING LITTLE BE
EVER SUSPECTED PO
TOP THIS AS THE IDEA

! ALL THIS AND CAMEO APPEARENCES IN EVERY MARVEL SUPER HERO

AN ANNUAL

Wolverine isn't looking too happy despite his appearance in this year's CAPTAIN AMERICA ANNUAL

TRADITION

It all began in 1963 when Marvel Comics published FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL #1, featuring a mammoth battle between the **Fantastic Four** and the **Sub-Mariner**, a reprise of the first **FF/Spider-Man** meeting from SPIDER-MAN #1, a rogues gallery of the FF's greatest foes, and short features revealing inside info about the FF, the ANNUAL established a tradition.

Over the course of the next several years, annuals would be reserved for most of Marvel's top heroes. Not only would the stories contained in the annuals be extra-long, but they would be extra-special, too! Annuals would feature team-ups of some of Marvel's deadliest villains, battles between heroes, and even an occasional wedding or birth! They quickly found a special place in the hearts of everyone.

And now, Marvel continues this grand tradition as 1986 Marvel Annuals are already hitting the stands! This summer will usher in a series of spectacular double-length stories which include tales told by special creative teams, guest appearances by favorite characters from the past and present, and lots and lots of super powered action!

The festivities will kick off with not one, not two, but three annuals coming your way this month! The 1986 CAPTAIN AMERICA ANNUAL guest stars the **X-Men's Wolverine** doing what he does best! **Tess-One**, an adamantium robot long ago programmed to destroy **Captain America**, has been reactivated and has started hunting mutants. And it's up to Cap and Wolverine to stop it! The story is written by regular CAPTAIN AMERICA scripter **Mark Gruenwald** and features art by a classic CAP art team from the past, **Mike Zeck** and **John Beatty**! This will be Mike and John's first CAPTAIN AMERICA work in three years, following their phenomenal success on MARVEL SUPER HERO SECRET WARS and the recent PUNISHER Limited Series!

Special art is also the rule in WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #2. Written by X-MEN and NEW MUTANTS Editor **Ann Nocenti**, it's being penciled by **Art Adams**, the sensational newcomer whose work on the LONGSHOT Limited Series took the comics world by storm! And the Annual's assistant editor, **Adam Blaustein**, promises that "this is the most amazing stuff Art's done yet!" Entitled "Wake Me Up, I Must Be Dreaming," the story centers around **Spider-Man** and **Warlock's** (of NEW MUTANTS fame) attempt to help a group of laboratory animals. Over the course of the story, readers will gain new insight into the personalities of both the web-slinger and the alien mutant.

Also appearing in May will be the first-ever ALPHA FLIGHT ANNUAL! Regular ALPHA FLIGHT writer, **Bill Mantlo** and inker, **Gerry Talaoc** are welcoming aboard ALIEN LEGION penciler **Larry Stroman** for the oc-

Captain Britain comes a'calling in this year's NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL!

casion, and together, the trio is spinning a tale of suspense and the supernatural! "Mansion Alpha is haunted by the ghost of its past resident—someone we've seen before!" reveals **Carl Potts**, the Annual's editor. Even the Alphans are at a loss for what to do when their own house turns against them!

The members of **X-Factor** are also at a loss when they must track down and defeat an enemy within their own ranks in June's X-FACTOR ANNUAL #1! "Grand Design" is the title of the gripping story in which one of Marvel's hottest new super-teams leaps from the pages of its regular monthly title into an Annual of its own! It's written and penciled by X-FACTOR's co-creator **Bob Layton** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**, who's recently been busy inking just about every Marvel character in existence in the OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION.

Joe is also inking this year's PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL. Scripted by PETER PARKER writer **Peter David** and penciled by POWER MAN/IRON FIST artist **Mark Bright**, the Annual spotlights the return of the ultra-cool, ultra-hip **Ace**, who was first introduced in 1985's PETER PARKER ANNUAL. As the Annual's assistant editor, Adam Blaustein, puts it, "Ace it. 'Nuff said."

Another old, familiar character returns in the 1986 INCREDIBLE HULK ANNUAL. Scripter **Danny Fingeroth** (taking some time out from his editorial duties on THE MARVEL SAGA) and artist **Sal Buscema** are putting their all into the Annual, as **the Hulk** faces one of his deadliest foes! The gamma-powered, super-strong **Abomination** is back from space, and he's looking to settle some old scores with Ol' Greenskin! And you just know that's bound to mean fireworks aplenty!

Things aren't much quieter in the current IRON MAN ANNUAL! Project Pegasus, the secret government installation which studies super-beings in an attempt to solve the energy crisis, has gone bad! And **Iron Man** and everyone's favorite ex-**X-Men**, X-Factor, are all that stand in the way of disaster! **Bob Harras** is the writer, and art chores are being handled by **Paul Neary** and **Scott Williams**.

Iron Man plays a role in the tale which spans the AVENGERS and WEST COAST AVENGERS ANNUALs as well. Each of the annuals has its own self-contained story, but the two fit together into a larger epic! The story begins in the AVENGERS ANNUAL, and writer Danny Fingeroth and artistic great **Steve Ditko** (of **Spider-Man** and **Doctor Strange** fame) get it off to a flying start! **The Avengers** are brought up on charges by the government—and the traitor who turned them in is one of them! And to top it off, the Avengers have to battle the **Freedom Force**!

As the scene shifts to the WEST COAST AVENGERS ANNUAL, WCA scripter **Steve Englehart** and guest artist Mark Bright reveal the identity of the traitor! But **the West Coasters** don't have too much time to act on the knowledge—they've got their hands full with the return of the criminal organization **Zodiac**!

The setting is completely different when British artist **Alan Davis** joins **Chris Claremont** (and you don't really have to be told who *Chris* is, do you?) to produce the all-new NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL. A number of old, familiar faces appear as the New Mutants are joined by **Captain Britain** and his telepathic sister **Betsy** in their struggle against **Mojo** and **Spiral**, the deadly villains from the LONGSHOT Limited Series! Mojo and Spiral wreak havoc with **the Mutants**, making them age at an incredible pace! And it all ties into the villains' heinous plot: Capturing children through television!

Chris Claremont and Art Adams pick up the story three months later in the X-MEN ANNUAL, guest starring **Longshot**. The villains' mischief continues—but in reverse! And when the X-Men fall prey to their power ... well, let's just say that the phrase "X-Babies" takes on a whole new meaning!

But before the X-MEN ANNUAL hits the stands, readers will thrill to July's AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL. Written by SPIDER-MAN Editor **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **Mark Beachum** (whose work is on display each month in PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN), and inked by POWER PACK inker **Bob Wiacek**, the story is aptly titled "Man of the Year." The question, though, is "Which year?" as Spider-Man meets the Iron Man of the year 2020! And as readers of the MACHINE MAN Limited Series know, that era's Iron Man isn't too friendly!

And speaking of being not too friendly, everyone's favorite snarling, sword-wielding barbarian will be hard at work in the CONAN THE BARBARIAN ANNUAL coming in October! This year's Annual features the tale of an ancient—and somewhat barbaric—optometrist! That's right!

The forces of X-Factor are ready for action in their first annual!

The cover scene from the very first ALPHA FLIGHT ANNUAL!

And the old doctor's very young wife has apparently stolen all his gold and left with a young boyfriend. After realizing that Conan didn't steal the gold himself, the doctor hires everyone's favorite barbarian to track the young couple down. As writer **Jim Owsley** tells us, it'll be a strange and wacky story. "Bride of the Occultist" will also have artwork by CONAN veteran **Ernie Chan**.

And as the weather turns colder in November, Americans all over the country will be warming their hands over the blazing guns of the 1986 G.I. JOE YEARBOOK! In addition to a new action-packed saga by regular G.I. JOE scripter **Larry Hama**, the YEARBOOK will feature a review of the past year's worth of G.I. JOE and a rogues gallery of the Joes' greatest enemies!

That's sure a lot of great stuff to keep an eye out for! And to help you keep up to date on all the latest news from Marvel, the MARVEL AGE ANNUAL returns in June! Like last year, the ANNUAL will feature "Marvel A to Z," a peek at what's coming next year in all the Marvel titles! And intercut with the preview will be an assortment of new comics features, pin-ups, and gags from the pens of such Marvel writers and artists as **Walt Simonson, Al Milgrom, Roger Stern, Jo Duffy, Kerry Gammill, Louise Simonson**, and Steve Englehart! And as if that weren't enough, the ANNUAL also includes a look back at Marvel's 25-year history and the eagerly awaited first preview of Marvel's New Universe! Rounding out the issue is a reprint of **Jack Kirby's** humorous look at comics writing, "This is a Plot?," and a tongue-in-cheek "reprint" of an issue of MARVEL AGE from 1963, previewing "those great new superteam," THE AVENGERS and THE X-MEN!

And that about wraps it up! This year's crop of annuals certainly promises to be chock full of adventure, surprises, and fun! And don't worry if your favorite Marvel character doesn't have an annual yet. After all, there's always *next* year!

—Shelly Fisch

STAR SPOTLIGHT

HUGGA BUNCH™

I was knotting my tie in front of my bathroom mirror. All of a sudden a face popped out of the mirror. It wasn't my face, which surprised me. It was kind of cute, in a strange sort of way. Before I could say "Strawberry Shortcake," little hands grabbed my tie and I was pulled into the mirror. Needless to say, I was nonplussed.

"You're **Sandy Hausler**, aren't you?" asked this little creature. She looked sort of like an animated doll and was only about three feet tall.

"That's me," I replied. I noticed other little beings starting to gather around me.

"I'm **Huggins** and we're **the Hugga Bunch**," she informed me.

All of a sudden everything made sense. This was **Jim Salicrup's** doing! It was time for another Star Spotlight for MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE and he'd sent this gang to see me without telling me.

I wracked my brains. Yeah, I'd heard of the Hugga Bunch. Toy stores couldn't keep Hugga Bunch dolls in stock, they're so popular. There have been some Hugga Bunch TV specials. These guys are big, even if they are only three feet tall.

"You seem a little confused," Huggins remarked. "I hope we didn't scare you."

"Of course you didn't," I snapped. "You're talking to a guy who's interviewed **Planet Terry** on a small planet in the vicinity of Betelguese. But he made an appointment." Huggins seemed suitably chastened. "I'm sorry," she said. "We Hugga Bunchers are just the spontaneous type. I like your tie, by the way. Is it silk?"

"Yeah, it is." I took out my pad and pencil. It was time to get to work. Huggins noticed that I was ready to get started. She introduced me to the Bunch. There was **Tickles** and **Tuggins**, **Bubbles** and **Hugsy**, **Hug-A-bye** and **Giglet**, **Chumley** and who knows how many more. They all lived in a place called—you guessed it—Hugga Land. Huggins told me that their only desire is to have fun and show everyone how happy hugs can make them. Somehow I was not surprised.

Huggins led me over to the magic signpost. She spun it around. When it stopped it was pointing due west and said "Path of Knowledge." Well, I was game. I wanted to gain as much knowledge about this place as I could while I was there.

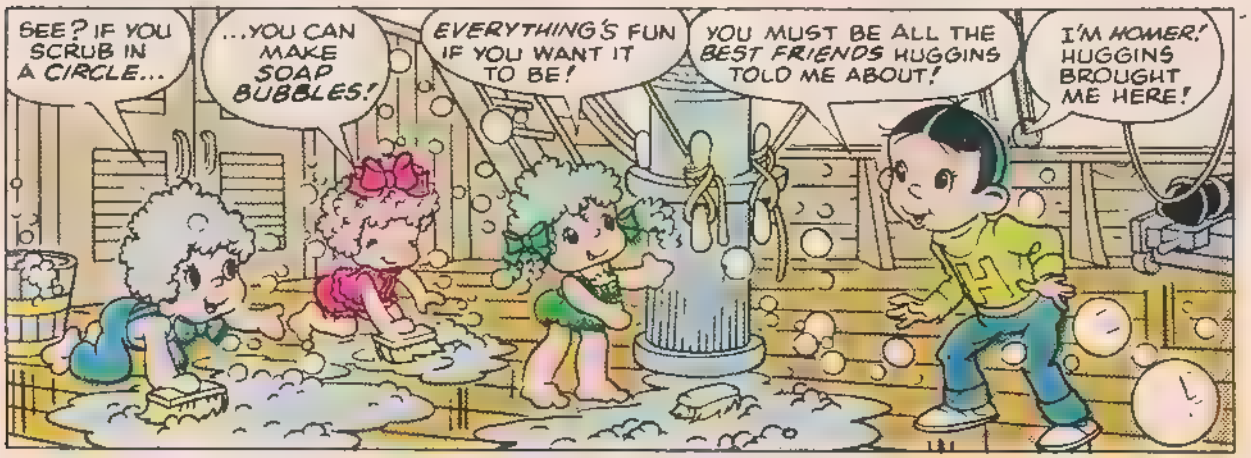
As I walked down the road I noticed that there were comic books growing on the trees. When I pointed this out to Huggins, who had accompanied me, she squealed with delight.

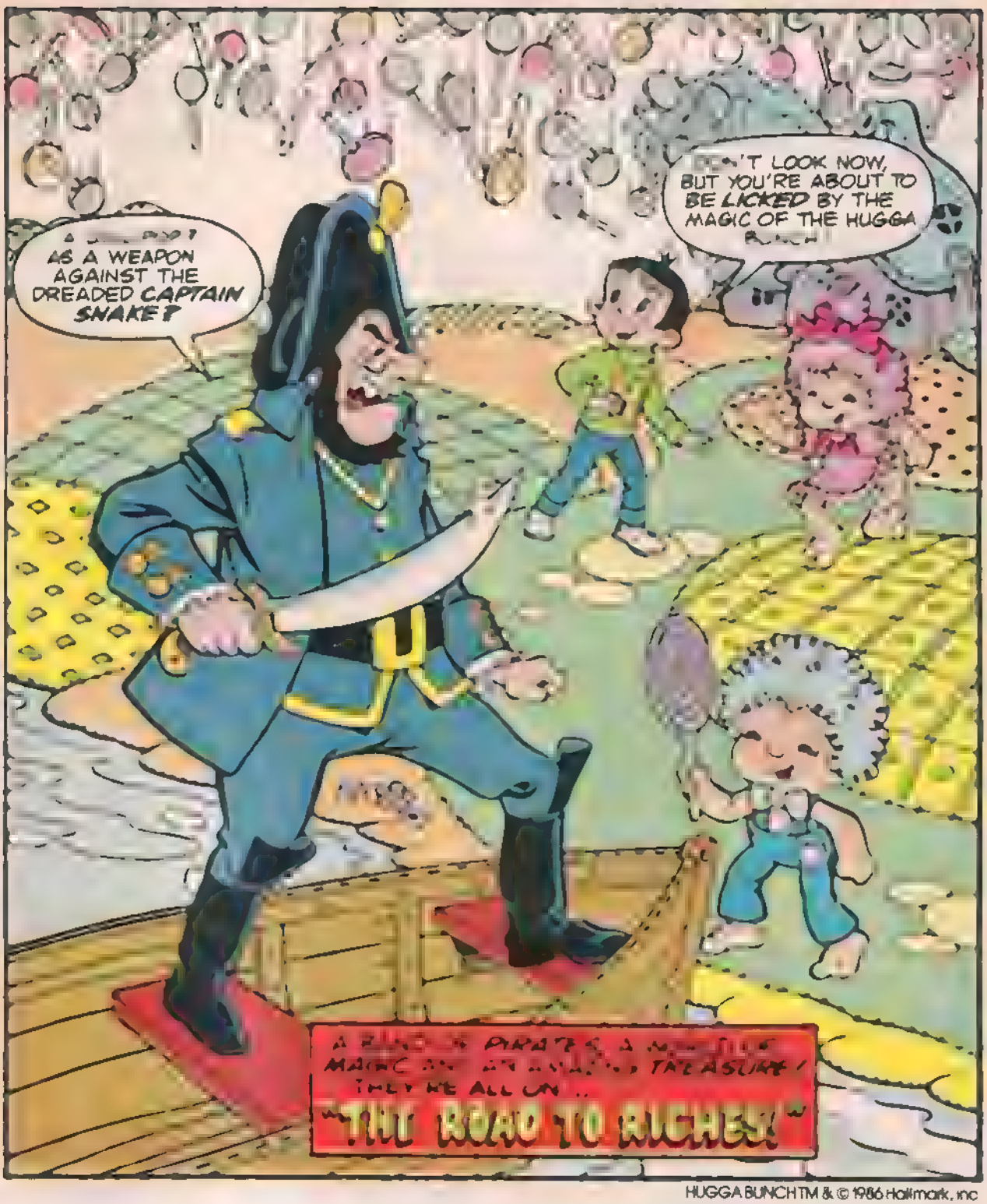
"It must be issue #1," she squeaked excitedly.

I picked one off a nearby oak. It was indeed HUGGA BUNCH #1. I took a few minutes to read through it. "Not bad," I thought as I finished. The story involved a boy named **Homer** who had moved to a new neighborhood and was very unhappy about it. The Hugga Bunch bring him to Hugga Land and show him how to overcome his shyness and make new friends in his own neighborhood. The story also had pirate and sword fights galore. As an old *Captain Blood* fan, I was delighted. I was even more delighted when I looked at the credits.

Stan Kay is writing HUGGA BUNCH. Stan has quite a reputation in the comic field. He was an editor for King Features and also did a lot of scripts at Harvey comics, including **Casper, the Friendly Ghost** and **Richie Rich**. He taught caricature, cartooning and life drawing at *the Joe Kubert School of Art*. He has also written a number of Star Comics, including CARE BEARS, MUPPET BABIES, FRAGGLE ROCK, STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE and the upcoming POPPLES.

Warren Kremer will be the artist on the series. Warren, along with the late **Lennie Herman**, helped usher in the Star Comics line, drawing TOP DOG, PLANET TERRY and ROYAL ROY. He also works on EWOKS and HEATHCLIFF.


SEE? IF YOU SCRUB IN A CIRCLE...
...YOU CAN MAKE SOAP BUBBLES!
EVERYTHING'S FUN IF YOU WANT IT TO BE!
YOU MUST BE ALL THE BEST FRIENDS HUGGINS TOLD ME ABOUT!
I'M HOMER! HUGGINS BROUGHT ME HERE!


AS A WEAPON AGAINST THE DREADED CAPTAIN SNAKE?
'T LOOK NOW, BUT YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE LICKED BY THE MAGIC OF THE HUGGA
"THE ROAD TO RICHES!"

HUGGA BUNCH TM & © 1986 Hallmark, inc

Like Stan, Warren has had a long and distinguished career at Harvey Comics.

We continued down the road to the seashore. The water looked so inviting I jumped in—clothes and all. While underwater I saw **Soft Stuff**, a whole friend of the Bunch, and **Octo-Hug**, a giant octopus. The colors in the Hugga Land sea were brighter than those in our world; the water tasted sweet rather than salty. As I surfaced, I realized an important truth—Hugga Land was a nice place to be.

I got out of the water and told Huggins what I had learned. "You *did* find knowledge," she said.

Huggins walked me back to the Hugga Bunch village and gave me a hug. Now, I prefer my hugs to come from sultry blondes with blue eyes you can drown in, but her hug felt good. Then she pushed me through a sunbeam, and I wound up back in my bathroom.

I looked at the mirror. All I saw was my own face looking back at me. For a moment I wondered if it had been a dream (or maybe an imaginary story). My clothes were still wet. It had been real enough.

I have to admit that I've left a bit of myself behind in Hugga Land. You will too, after you've read an issue of HUGGA BUNCH.

—Sandy Hausler

THE MARVEL AGE 1972 (PART II)

Better get yourself settled in quickly, because we've got a lot of ground to cover this time! This installment focuses on more exciting origins than you can shake a Skrull at, so let's get right to them!

1972 would feature the first appearances of some of Marvel's most unusual super heroes, and one of the most unusual found his start in Seagate Prison! Imprisoned for a crime he didn't commit, inmate **Lucas** volunteered for a medical experiment being run by **Dr. Noah Burstein**. Lucas expected a parole in return, but after he entered Burstein's tank of chemicals, a corrupt guard turned up the voltage full blast! The tank exploded, and instead of being killed, Lucas found himself the possessor of super-strength and steel-hard skin! He used his newfound power to escape, and made his way to New York. Once there, he took a new name, bought himself a second-hand costume, rented an office in Times Square, and became LUKE CAGE, HERO FOR HIRE! Although it would be a while before he would call himself **Power Man** and join up with **Iron Fist**, Luke had lots to do, courtesy of writer **Archie Goodwin** and artists **George Tuska** and **Billy Graham**. He went after the man who'd framed him, only to find that he had used his deadly knack with knives to become **Diamondback** (not to be confused with the female member of **the Serpent Society** recently in CAPTAIN AMERICA)! When one of Diamondback's knives backfired and the villain was killed, Luke's last hope of being cleared seemed lost! And to make things even worse, Luke soon ran into Noah Burstein, who'd given up his research to open a medical clinic! Noah agreed to keep Luke's secret, though, and their meeting paid off when Luke met Noah's co-worker, **Dr. Claire Temple**, the woman with whom he'd soon fall in love. Another friend was found in **D.W. Griffith**, who managed the movie theater under Luke's office. Unfortunately, Luke also met **Gideon Mace**, whose right hand had been replaced with an iron mace, and who would prove to be one of Luke's deadliest foes! Luke beat Mace this time around, as he beat the **Phantom of 42nd Street** (an apparent ghost), but Mace would return more than once to make Luke's life difficult!

A different sort of super-doer also made her debut in 1972 in the first issue of THE CAT! Writer **Linda Fite** and artists **Marie Severin** and **Wally Wood** told the story of **Greer Nelson**, a young widow who assisted her old college professor **Dr. Tumolo** in a series of experiments. As a result of their work, Greer developed superhuman agility, coordination, strength, and perceptual abilities! But when Dr. Tumolo discovered millionaire **Mal Donalbain's** true reason for sponsoring the research, Donalbain had her killed! It seemed that Donalbain intended to create an army of woman robot soldiers to help him conquer the world! Equipped with one of Donalbain's cat-like uniforms, Greer set out as the Cat to avenge Dr. Tumolo's death. Greer's career would take some unexpected twists, though, and before too long, she would become the furry, feline **West Coast Avenger** known as **Tigra**!

That would be in the future, though. And in 1972, a number of other old familiar Marvel characters would be going through massive changes of their own! In the pages of MARVEL PREMIERE, the godlike **High Evolutionary** was creating a new Earth when his attention was caught by a large cocoon floating in space! The cocoon contained the being known only as **Him**, who'd previously fought **the Fantastic Four** and **Thor**. The High Evolutionary had intended his new world, Counter-Earth, to be a perfect world, but while he was distracted, the sinister **Man-Beast** infected Counter-Earth with evil! Him traveled to Counter-Earth to battle the Man-Beast's creations (like the half-man-half-rat **Rhodan**), and found himself rechristened **Adam Warlock**! With his struggle underway, Warlock handed the MARVEL PREMIERE reins over to another familiar character—the one and only **Dr. Strange**! Doc's return was ably handled by some of the best writers in the business, including **Stan Lee**, **Archie Goodwin**, and **Gardner Fox**, as well as artists such as **Frank Brunner** and **Barry Smith**. (You did catch Barry's beautiful work on a recent issue of THE X-MEN, didn't you?) Under the guiding hands of these men, Doc battled the likes of **Nightmare** and the serpentine **Sligguth** before leaving PREMIERE. Meanwhile, MARVEL SPOTLIGHT featured the debut of another supernatural character as the power of the Darkhold turned Jack Russell into a WEREWOLF BY NIGHT. The Werewolf was quickly followed by yet another brand-new character, one billed as "the most supernatural super hero of all!" When stunt cyclist **Johnny Blaze** discovered that his adopted father, **Crash Simpson**, was dying, he made a deal with **Satan** himself to spare Crash's life! The Devil cheated, though, and while Crash overcame his disease, he was killed in a horrible motorcycle accident instead! Johnny refused to go through with his deal, but he couldn't get out of it that easily! Satan placed a terrible curse on Johnny—each night, he would become a flaming-skulled demon, a **Ghost Rider**!

Another of Marvel's new characters had actually been around for about forty years! Writers **Steve Englehart** and **Roy Thomas** and artists **Ross Andru**, **Jim Mooney**, and **Ernie Chan** took their inspiration from **Lester Dent's** classic 1930's pulp novels to thrill a new generation with the adventures of DOC SAVAGE, MAN OF BRONZE! **Doc's** father had trained him almost from birth, causing the bronze-skinned adventurer to become a superman in both mind and body! Doc gathered a loyal band of companions including the ape-like chemical genius **Monk**, the smooth, sophisticated lawyer **Ham**, the mighty-fisted engineer **Renny**, the multisyllabic **Johnny**, and a wiry electrical engineer aptly named **Long Tom**. Together, the team traveled to the Mayan jungles of South America to avenge Doc's father's death at the hands of the **Son of the Feathered Serpent**! They found an intricate plot involving intrigue, a hidden Mayan civilization, gold, and a deadly plague! Clearing up the mystery was all in a day's work for the intrepid adventurers, though, and it wasn't long before they were on their way home again.

While Roy and Ross were bringing Doc and his crew home, though, they were sending one of Marvel's other new groups on trips in the pages of MARVEL FEATURE. **Doctor Strange**, **the Sub-Mariner**, and **the Hulk** traveled to Rutland, Vermont as the dynamic **Defen-**

ders to halt the malevolent machinations of the Dread Dormammu! And no sooner had they defeated the Lord of the Dark Dimension than they faced a challenge of a very different kind as they faced Xemnu the Titan! The alien Xemnu had returned to Earth (after having visited Earth previously as Xemnu the Hulk in a 1950s Atlas Comic) and become the host of an incredibly popular children's TV show. But the show was just a cover for his true (and even more dastardly) plot—stealing all of Earth's children! Xemnu managed to mesmerize Doctor Strange and Namor, but found that enslaving the Hulk's mind was beyond even his mighty power! With this story, the Defenders ended their stint in MARVEL FEATURE, only to reappear five months later in the fantastic first issue of THE DEFENDERS! The creative reins shifted to the able hands of Steve Englehart and Sal Buscema as the Defenders battled the sorcerer Necrodamus, joined forces with the Silver Surfer to fight Callizuma and his Warrior Wizards, and met a young woman named Barbara Norris while facing the mystical Nameless One. Barbara was driven mad by her experience, but there would be big things brewing for her in 1973!

MARVEL COMICS PRICE GUIDE

We covered a lot of special issues this time, and if you want to try to track them down at your local comics specialty shop, here's what you can expect to pay. Our source, as always, is *Overstreet Update #4*, the latest supplement to Robert Overstreet's *The Comic Book Price Guide*. Remember, though, prices may vary, and they should be even lower for copies in fair or poor condition.

	Condition		
	Good	Fine	Mint
THE CAT			
1	.40	1.20	2.40
DAREDEVIL			
83–94		.50	1.00
THE DEFENDERS			
1	2.00	6.00	12.00
II	.85	2.50	5.00
III	.65	2.00	4.00
DOC SAVAGE			
1		.40	.80
2		.25	.50
FANTASTIC FOUR			
118–120	.40	1.25	2.50
121–123	.65	2.00	4.00
124–127, 129	.35	1.00	2.00
128	.50	1.50	3.00
HERO FOR HIRE			
1	.50	1.50	3.00
2–4		.50	1.00
THE INCREDIBLE HULK			
147–158	.25	.75	1.50
IRON MAN			
45–46, 48–50	.35	1.00	2.00
47 (Barry Smith art)	.85	2.50	5.00
51–52, 54	.35	1.00	2.00
53 (Jim Starlin art)	.40	1.25	2.50
MARVEL FEATURE			
2–3	.65	2.00	4.00
4–6		.40	.80
MARVEL PREMIERE			
1	1.00	3.00	6.00
2	.85	2.50	5.00
3 (Barry Smith art)	1.25	3.75	7.50
4 (Barry Smith art)	.65	2.00	4.00
5	.35	1.00	2.00
MARVEL SPOTLIGHT			
2	.30	.90	1.80
3–4		.60	1.20
5	1.25	4.00	8.00
6–7	.50	1.50	3.00

Meanwhile, the Defenders' place in MARVEL FEATURE had been taken by the ever-diminutive Ant-Man. Hank Pym was working with some experimental drug samples, aided by a bright college student named Peter Parker and a trained dog named Orkie. But gangsters wanted Hank's samples, and they injected him with a deadly virus as insurance! The virus reacted with the shrinking chemicals in Hank's blood, and he found himself trapped at a height of only two inches. Despite his handicap, Hank managed to once again defeat one of his greatest foes, the evil genius Egghead. But his troubles grew even worse when his wife Jan was exposed to chemicals which caused her to become a Wasp in fact as well as in name!

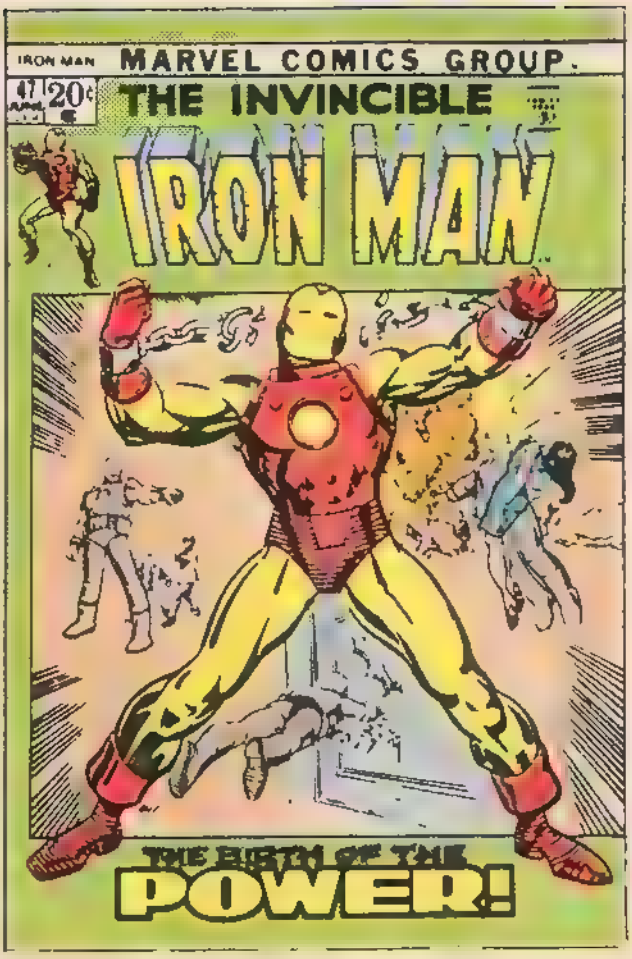
'72 was certainly a year of awesome origins and new beginnings! And those heroes who weren't just starting out were looking back on the way they began. Towards the end of the year, the ever-lovin' blue-eyed Thing reflected on the origin of the FANTASTIC FOUR. But first, the FF encountered a string of old friends and foes, courtesy of Stan Lee, Archie Goodwin, Roy Thomas, and master artist John Buscema. It began as the Foursome went to South America to free the Inhuman Crystal from the power of the evil alchemist Diablo. Then, the Human Torch and the Thing headed for Africa, where they aided the Black Panther (or the Black Leopard, as he was then calling himself) against Klaw and dealt a blow against apartheid. They returned to New York to defend Earth against the menace of Gabriel, the latest herald of Galactus! The Silver Surfer helped hold off his former master until Reed Richards could reset the instruments on Galactus's ship, sending him into the Negative Zone. Once Galactus was gone, the FF again faced the Monster from the Lost Lagoon! The alien Monster raided a New York hospital, but the FF offered him their help when they discovered that he needed the medica-

tion because his mate had caught an Earth virus. The FF managed to get a little time off after the Monster left, and the Thing had enough time to review the origin of the Fantastic Four. He remembered how they had flown a rocket into space but had neglected to install proper shielding. Cosmic rays penetrated the ship, turning the four pilots into the first super heroes of the Marvel Universe! As Ben recalled their first battle with **the Mole Man**, he realized that the blind villain might be able to restore the sight of Ben's blind girlfriend **Alicia**! Ben's mission eventually brought the Fantastic Four into conflict with the Mole Man and the subterranean monarchs Tyrannus and Kala, but it was all for nothing. The Mole Man couldn't relieve Alicia's blindness, or even his own. No sooner did they return to the surface than the Human Torch flew off to **the Inhumans'** Hidden Land, leaving his teammates and **Medusa** to face the all-new **Frightful Four**, complete with their newest member, the mighty-muscled Femizon Thundra!

The invincible IRON MAN took some time out to review his origin, too. But first, he had to take on the mysterious **Mr. Kline's** latest pawn, **the Night Phantom**, handle a group of protestors, and fight his old friend **the Guardian**! Finally, he found time to catch his breath and remembered how **Tony Stark** had been touring Vietnam and wound up with a piece of shrapnel next to his heart! With the help of the Vietnamese Professor Yinsen, Tony built himself a suit of armor which would not only keep him alive but also help him to become Iron Man! Rested and refreshed, Shellhead was ready to take on the world, which was a good thing as he battled **Firebrand**, **the Adaptoid** (the android with the powers of **the Avengers**, no less!), **Princess Python**, the newly rebuilt Adaptoid (a.k.a. **the Cyborg Sinister**), **the Black Lama**, and **Raga, Son of Fire**!

With Iron Man so busy, it was up to DAREDEVIL to solve the mystery of Mr Kline (or **the Assassin**, as he now called himself)! DD discovered that Kline's henchmen, **the Scorpion** and **Mr. Hyde** (who'd apparently died), weren't the real thing! They were androids— and so was Kline! Kline had come from the 32nd Century to change history, but he was stopped by DD, **the Black Widow**, and people from the 50th Century! Once the dust settled, Old Home Week began for ol' Hornhead as he fought **the Gladiator** and **the Ox** before moving to San Francisco with the Widow! When he g there, though, he found still more of his old enemies, including **Electro**, **Killgrave**, and a new **Mr. Fear**! Finally, he met up with a couple of new villains, the deadly **Blue Talon** and **the Indestructible Man**, and made short work of them, too.

Old Home Week continued in the pages of THE INCREDIBLE HULK. Just about every hero in the Marvel stable managed to make a guest appearance before the year was over! When the Hulk saw a green-haired young woman driving through the desert, he thought he had found his lost love, the emerald-hued **Jarella**. But the woman turned out not to be Jarella; it was the mutant mistress of magnetism **Lorna Dane** (who later took the name **Polaris** when she briefly rejoined the X-Men)! When the Hulk abducted her, her boyfriend and fellow X-Man **Havok** didn't take it too well! Even the Hulk couldn't stand before Havok's cosmic power! But if the Hulk thought his problems were over when Havok and Lorna left, he couldn't have been more wrong! Before long, he found himself facing pretty much everybody at once! It took the combined might of **Nick Fury** and **S.H.I.E.L.D.**, **Captain America**, the Fantastic Four, Daredevil, and **Spider-Man** to subdue him, and the stage was set for one of the strangest trials in history—the trial of the Hulk! Everyone turned out for the event with **Matt** (Daredevil) **Murdock** acting as the Hulk's defense counsel, "**Thunderbolt**" **Ross** testifying for the prosecution, and the defense witnesses including Iron Man, the Avengers, and Reed Richards! But when it became clear that the judge had set up a kangaroo court, Reed took the device he'd built to negate the Hulk's power and rigged it to increase it instead. The Hulk escaped from the courtroom and headed for Hank (Ant-Man) Pym's lab to get the chemicals that would shrink him down to microscopic size and return him to Jarella's sub-atomic world. When he got there, he ended up teamed with Ant-Man against the combined forces of **the Chameleon** and Hydra! The Hulk eventually did manage to shrink down to Jarella's world, but the trip wasn't an easy one. He got stuck in a different microscopic world, one in which the godlike **Shaper of Dreams** had taken the dream of an ex-Nazi and produced a world which had been conquered by the Nazis and ruled by the powerful **Captain Axis**! The Hulk destroyed the Nazi's dream world before the Shaper made the Hulk's dream come true and sent him to Jarella. Thanks to a bit of magic, the Hulk received Bruce Banner's mind upon his arrival, but he quickly saw that Jarella's world was not as he had left it! Jarella had been overthrown, and a usurper named **K'ai** had seized the throne! The Hulk rallied Jarella's forces and led them to victory, but not before K'ai caused him to fight his greatest fear—the bestial, mindless Hulk! Before he could enjoy the fruits of his triumph, though, the shrinking serum the Hulk had taken wore off and he grew to normal size! He'd lost Jarella yet again.



Lots more happened in 1972, but we're getting dangerously near the bottom of the page, so we'd better save the rest for next time. We'll look at the return of **the Sub-Mariner's** creator, and the end of the world! So come on back! We'll be waiting!

—Shelly Fisch

NEW TALENT DEPARTMENT

Jim Sanders III is an aspiring inker from Jacksonville, Florida who is hoping to make it big in comics. This month, the New Talent Department introduces the man and his work.

Jim is a self-taught artist who has always loved comic books. Through the efforts of an acquaintance, Jim decided to give the medium a try professionally. He started as a penciler for a small company, Paragon Comics, about four years ago. During his short stay with Paragon, Jim introduced his own creation in a title called "Starforce Six."

"I couldn't keep up with the schedule," said Jim of his stint as a penciler. "I decided to try my hand as an inker and found I had greater proficiency."

Through various contacts, Jim got his hands on photocopies of professional pencil work and put together samples of his inking. He was then encouraged to come to New York to show his work around the Marvel offices. "I had a portfolio of eight pages of inked pencils," explained Jim, "including **Spider-Man** breakdowns by **John Buscema** and unpublished Dazzler pages by **Jackson Guice**."

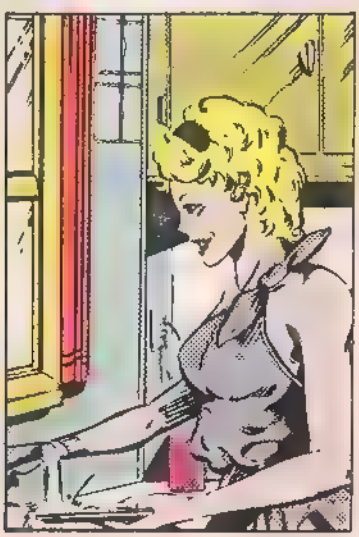
"The people up at Marvel—those who weren't busy—were very open and willing to talk about and look at my work," said Jim. "I caught **Jim Shooter** on a particularly good day and **Mike Higgins** was helpful. I met **Jack Abel** and during our talk he taught me a lot about getting away from cliches in my inks."

Jim feels he has been most influenced by **Dick Giordano** and **Bob McLeod**. He also looks at the work of **Tom Palmer** and **Joe Rubinstein**.

Jim grew up in Jacksonville, Florida and still lives there with his grandparents. "I enjoy drawing," he said. "Art runs in my family, and they have been very supportive."

If Marvel called today and gave him his choice of which title he would like to work on, Jim knows what his answer would be. "I'd like to work on ALPHA FLIGHT," he said. "And the AVENGERS. And I'd love to ink anything by Bob McLeod."

Jim sees himself as an inker, and that is the area he is planning to concentrate on for awhile "because I'm still learning storytelling and aspects of perspective that a penciler just has to know."



When he isn't busy putting together samples, Jim likes to sketch, draw, read comics, and study books on art. He also enjoys taking a break every once in a while with his friends. "I want to make a career out of comics," he explained. "I've always wanted to entertain people and make them happy. Comics do both. They kept me together when I was growing up and I want to put some of what they gave to me back in. I'm going to try hard to make it."

Mike Higgins has sent Jim an inventory job to work on. He's looking forward to doing his best on it and hopes to see it published. We're looking forward to seeing him make it, too.

We showed James's samples to one of the most influential people at Marvel —Editor-in-Chief **Jim Shooter**.

Here's what Jim had to say.

"James did a pretty good job. He has pretty good control of the tools, which is kind of the first thing you have to have. You have to be able to make the brush or pen do what you want it to do.

"He also has a lot of technique. He doesn't have an entire body of technique at his command, but he has quite a bit of it. Inkers have been figuring out ways to make water look like water, wood look like wood, steel look like steel for years. It's something that inkers have to learn that's different from any of the other disciplines.

"If you want to be an inker, you can invent all your own techniques, start at the bottom, and work your way up. But you don't have to. You can learn from what other people have done and you can build on it. It's the only discipline for which I really recommend that a guy who wants to be an inker spend a lot of time looking at other people's work to see how they did water, to see how they did hair . . . He can develop his own technique, but if you start out trying to invent all your own techniques, it's like trying to build a car by inventing the wheel. You can develop your own distinctive personality later; you may be able to build on what others have already accomplished.

"James has some technique that he has mastery of. He has a nice wood technique on the wood in the background on the DAZZLER splash page. He does nice little metal technique here and there. So he does have some control of the tools and knowledge of technique. He could probably learn some more, though. He could take a good look at how John Romita does hair, for instance. On page 3, of THE DAZZLER, you can't really tell the cloth of the drapes from the wood or the wood from the steel in some of the panels. So he can get better at that.

"He should learn to draw a little more. One way to improve your inking skills is to improve your drawing skills. An inker doesn't have to actually draw the panel, but even to effectively interpret what the penciler has done, you have to understand it yourself. Now, in a couple of cases, he's working on **John Buscema** pages! There are no better drawn pages in the world! And I see things where he's misunderstood or failed to properly interpret what John has done, and has weakened the drawing rather than enhanced it. For example, in the SPIDER-MAN

Page 2 of John Buscema's SPIDER-MAN

CAPTAIN AMERICA page penciled by Mike Zeck

The Ron Frenz SPIDER-MAN page

splash page, a lot of the folds in the cloth—now, these were breakdowns and I'm pretty sure John just sketched them in there—James really wasn't able to lend much credibility to some of that stuff. Now, in page 2, panel 2 of the Buscema SPIDER-MAN, I think he did a very good job with the anatomy. I think he built up what John gave him and he did a pretty good job of it. There are other things like this hand in panel 5 and some of the faces that he probably did not make as strong as John had them in the pencils. When you see the CAPTAIN AMERICA page by **Mike Zeck** ... Mike is very good. Mike's not as good a draftsman as John Buscema is; I don't think it'll surprise anyone to hear that. No one's as good a draftsman as John Buscema is! But with Mike, whose drawing is very good but it's not quite as strong as John Buscema's, James's trouble shows up even a little more. It's just not as solid and believable as it ought to be. And the DAZZLER pages look like very old **Jackson Guice**, Jackson occasionally had some difficulty with anatomy back in those days, and James isn't helping very much. So the drawing is one area where James can get better and where most inkers can get better.

"The other thing that a lot of inkers have trouble with, including a lot who are professionals earning money as inkers, is creating depth. There are several ways artists create the illusion of depth. I mean, first of all, paper's flat. It's a two-dimensional surface no matter how you slice it, so we're talking about creating an illusion of depth. One of the ways artists will create the illusion of depth is by use of perspective. Another is by overlapping things; things that are in front must be closer. Another is by size relationships: when you know how big a person is and one person is bigger than the other, your eye reads that as one person being closer than the other. And

The SPIDER-MAN splash page

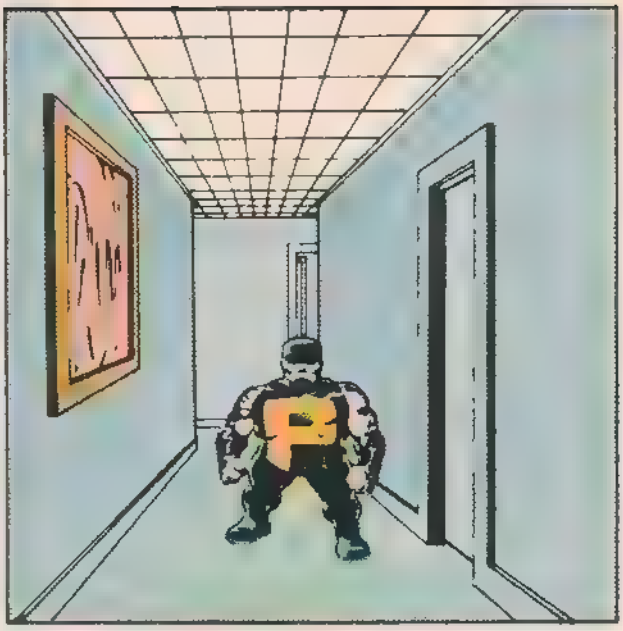
Page 2 of the DAZZLER

another way is through value, how dark something is or how light something is. By using value to separate planes, an inker can reinforce the illusion that something is closer and something is farther. Most often, simple atmospheric perspective is the way that's done. In other words, things that are in the front are darker and more solid and things that are in the back are lighter and more open. But not always, there are thousands of ways to use value to create the illusion of depth. I've seen people do a dark foreground, a lit middle ground, and an even darker background which makes you feel you're focusing on the middle part and the other things are sort of dark and fuzzy. I've seen every combination you can name, and they've all worked.

"I think James is just putting in the weights either where the penciler did or in kind of a random way. In page 2, panel 3 of THE DAZZLER, for instance, the shadow could just as easily be the edge of this towel as a shadow on the door. He drops blacks in an almost abstract way, and you're not sure just what's an object and what's a shadow, or whether something is close or far. And it starts to become hard to read. When I say 'hard to read,' I mean it should be apparent at a glance. He doesn't know quite what to do with it. In panel 2 of the Ron Frenz SPIDER-MAN page, he's got a black Spider-Man and the penciler's indicated a black background, so James leaves a thick blob of white around him, which doesn't really solve the problem. It doesn't tell me what's close and what's far. In Panel 3, it's hard to tell whether this piece of black is something close or something far. It becomes an abstract shape. It's hard to read. He does that pretty consistently throughout. He doesn't really use the values. You don't get any sensation of depth. I don't think he really understands the process at work there. I

The DAZZLER splash page

Overlapping shapes also help make depth believable.



As discussed in our article: using perspective to establish depth . . .

think he's too misled by the pencils. Probably, the penciler's indicated some of these blacks, and I don't think James understands that an inker's not just there to follow lines, he's there to do some interpretation. If the penciler indicates something black, that doesn't mean the inker must follow it. The inker may say, 'Well, he has shaded it there, but I'm not going to make it black. I'm going to make it dark, but not flat black.' Or he may say, 'No, this guy has made a misjudgment. It works in the pencils where you have countless values because you're working with grays, but it doesn't work in plain old, cold black and white.' The inker is really the final arbiter of what is light and what is dark. And I think James will be better when he starts carrying the ball a little more about the values.

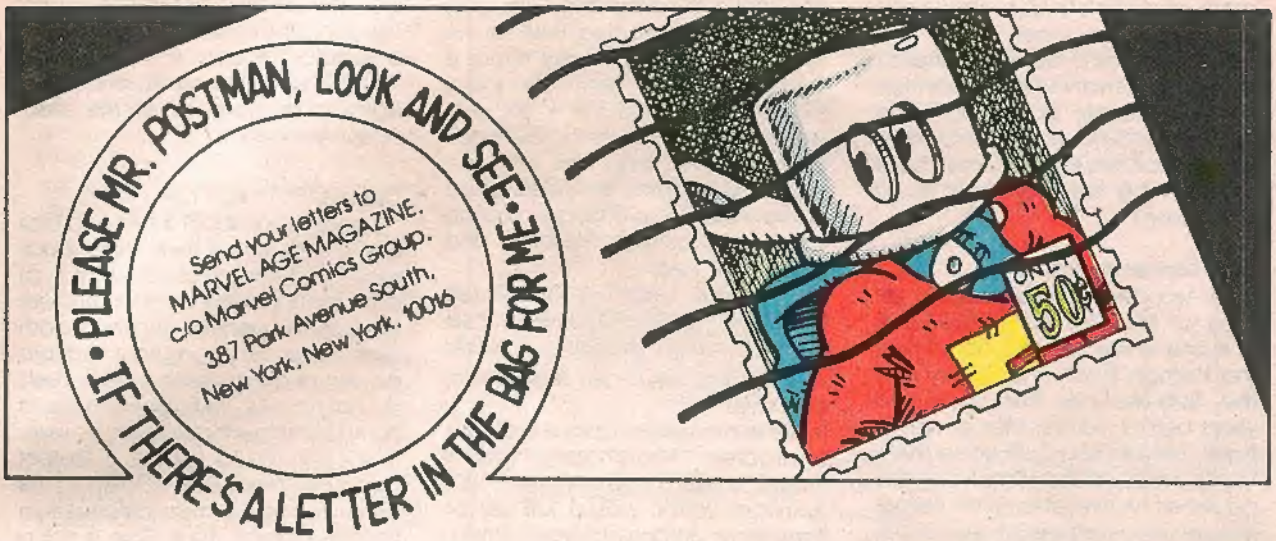
"Page 2, panel 1 of THE DAZZLER is another place where James didn't really know what to do. He had the edge of this bookcase coming down here and I don't think he knew quite how to handle this, so he just sort of ended the black and it makes no visual sense. You don't know if this is an object or not. Now, it was probably confusing in the pencils. But that's part of an inker's job. An inker's job is to clarify.

"Basically, I always give the priorities of what an inker has to accomplish in this way: An inker has to clarify, he has to create depth, and he has to be convincing—he has to make flat look flat, round look round, glass look like glass, hair look like hair, and like that there. The final goal to keep in mind, the primary goal that all the creators in a comic are striving for is storytelling. We're here to tell a story, guys. So the inker has to do what's necessary to contribute to the telling of the story."

All in all, how would Jim sum up his opinion of James's work? "This guy's got a future."

—*Shelly Fisch and Bill Slavicsek*

In this illustration, the difference in the figures' size shows the distance between them. The use of shadow on the foreground figure brings him further forward as well.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Jeff Runyan of Mira Loma, CA, would like it pointed out that since the song quoted above was originally recorded by none other than *The Marvelettes*, it is a perfectly appropriate title for a MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE letter column. And who are we to argue?

And while we're quoting, we can point out that *Andy Warhol* once said that in the future, everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes. Well, we at MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE are doing our part to make the future a reality, by running a different title for this column every month, and giving full credit to the Marvelite (not to be confused with Marvellette) who thought up that month's title. Jeff Runyan, your fifteen minutes started about forty seconds ago. Next month, it'll be someone else's turn—someone who sends us in a great lettercol title. But remember—if you don't enter, you can't win—and Andy Warhol will have to keep waiting for his future to materialize! So don't delay, send your suggestions today!

But enough of this foolish pseudo-artistic posturing! On to the letters!

Dear Marvel Maniacs,

I have a few questions I hope you can answer.

1) Where are the Transformers? They have not appeared in THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION! (I give out a lot of those Transformer toys, you know.)

2) When will you introduce the new Transformers? (Got to keep up with all those new toys . . .)

3) Will you have TRANSFORMERS Annuals? (I just love reading them.)

4) Peter Parker wore glasses before he became Spider-Man, and spiders have bad vision—so when he was bitten by a radioactive spider shouldn't his eyesight have gotten worse not improved?

5) You all have been good boys and girls this year so don't worry, you'll get your toys.

Santa Claus
North Pole

1) The Transformers won't be appearing in the HANDBOOK, *Santa* —but you'll be happy to know that there's a TRANSFORMERS HANDBOOK in the workds, not unlike our one-shot OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE CONAN UNIVERSE. We'll preview it in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE when it's ready to come out.

2) The new Transformers will be showing up in the pages of THE TRANSFORMERS, but not at any specific time. They'll be showing up occasionally as the series goes on.

3) Maybe next year. But be on the lookout for the upcoming G.I. JOE VERSUS THE TRANSFORMERS Limited Series, as well as our adaptation of the Transformers' movie.

4) Well, he didn't get smaller, either, so he clearly didn't get *all* of a spider's attributes. What probably happened is that his poor eyesight was caused by weak eye muscles, and the spider-bite caused *all* of his muscles to get stronger, including his eye muscles.

5) Gee, thanks. We got this letter in mid-December, so you can imagine how secure it made us feel. We appreciate the thought, and good luck with next year!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I have been reading and enjoying Marvel comics for many years . . . but there are a few things I think should never have happened.

1) Please get rid of Rachel Summers. Ever since she came to THE X-MEN it has gotten stupid. I have over 150 X-MEN comics, and THE X-MEN has been doing great, but ever since Rachel, forget it—it's all a nightmare since #188. (No offense —I still love the X-Men, but I guarantee you this: If you get rid of Rachel Summers THE X-MEN's sales will go up 100%!)

2) God bless you for getting rid of the Beyonder! Ever since he came to Earth the whole Marvel Universe has been falling apart. The first series of SECRET WARS was great. You should have stopped while you were ahead.

3) Please get Ben Grimm (the Thing) back together with the FF. They're hopeless without him.

4) What's going on with Kitty Pryde and the big Russian? Get them together already.

5) Get rid of the Skrulls, Kree, Celestials, E.T.s, etc. Keep the battles on Earth.

By the way, keep up the good work.

Nicholas Sacoulas
43-53 164th St.
Flushing, NY 11358

1) Will you *really* guarantee that X-MEN sales will double if we ditch Rachel Summers? That's a pretty tall order, *Nicholas*, and we'd hate to have to call you on it.

2) Oh, then you don't want to hear about SECRET WARS III, huh? No, no, just kidding. You can relax now. You too, Jim—all you have to worry about now are all the other books we put out!

3) Keep watching FANTASTIC FOUR.

4) Well, we try, but they just throw Cheez Doodles at each

other and stick their tongues out. Maybe another time.

5) All of them? No more aliens? Remember, that includes *Warlock*, the *Silver Surfer*, *Starfox*, *Kofi* and lots more! And if we had kept our characters Earthbound, there wouldn't be any Fantastic Four! What then?

Dear Marvel Agents,

I'm wondering, after reading an issue of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE (the one where you told about how the Human Torch, the Angel and the Sub-Mariner first appeared years before the first Marvel comic book, FANTASTIC FOUR #1, in MARVEL COMICS #1), how Timely Comics published Marvel characters before Marvel Comics came into existence. My question is: "How did you achieve the copyright for three characters that were not first published by you?"

Matt Davis
No Address Given

The answer's pretty simple, *Matt*: Timely Comics and Marvel Comics are the same company. We just didn't start calling ourself Marvel until the 1960s. When the company started, it was Timely Comics. In the 1950s it was known as Atlas comics (although the Atlas Comics that existed in the 1970s shouldn't be confused with us), and then by the time FF #1 came out it was Marvel Comics, which we've been ever since. All clear?

By the way, the Angel and the Human Torch that appeared in MARVEL COMICS #1, in 1939, are not the same characters as the ones appearing today under those names—although the original Human Torch is still with us, albeit in a slightly different form. He went through some changes in the 1960s, and is now *the Vision*.

Dear Kind Editors,

Please print this letter.

Thank you

Wilshin X
2201 Rocky Lane
Apt. #1005
Odessa, TX 79762

Well, okay, just this once, as long as we're following Andy Warhol's dictum this month. But we'd really prefer that the letters we print actually *say* something. If you know what we mean.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I'm writing this letter in response to "Frankie," whose letter was published in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #36. Frankie, you think that just because you're a New Waver, everyone else has to be one, including comic book characters. Well, let me tell you something. Heavy Metal is becoming one of the most popular forms of rock and roll. I, for one, would love to see a comic book character with long hair. I, myself, have hair past my shoulders and I would welcome a change in comic book characters. Venom and Spider-Man rule!

Dave "Death Metal" Schalek
1144 Valley Stream Drive
Wheeling, IL 60090

And so does Yngwi Malmstein, eh, *Dave*?

We're not ready to make all our characters Metalheads (*Adam Philips*, MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE's Assistant Editor, would kill us) or New Wavers (*Dawn Geiger*, lynchpin of the MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE Production Team, would give us grievous bodily injury). We are considering a 12-part Limited Series where *the Glenn Miller* of another universe comes to Earth, turns all our heroes into Big Band fans, and makes 'em all wear zoot suits. But we probably won't do it, since it would make *Tom Morgan* of the Art Department go berserk and maybe hurt himself and others.

By the way, did you know that the last sentence of your letter is actually a Punk/New Wave phrase, that originated in London as part of the Punk movement? Just thought you'd like to know.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I recently was skimming through some of my older comics and started reading BEWARE THE CLAWS OF THE CAT #1 from 1972. I think you should read it, it's very good. I know the team that brought it to us disassembled for other projects, so would you bring her back? She's really interesting. Make a story like she was kidnaped or something. I know you listen to your readers so would you read it—I know you'd love it. It's real outstanding.

On the subject of women, where can we find the new Spider-Woman? She wasn't in the second SECRET WARS.

Mike Mahar
No Address Given

You can find the new Spider-Woman in X-MEN #206, *Mike*, where she joins *the Freedom Force*. And as for *the Cat*, well, rest assured we have read her series, and we can't bring her back because ... she's still around! We don't blame you for not recognizing her, though. She's been through some changes. After the CAT series ended, Greer Nelson was mystically transformed into Tigra in GIANT-SIZE CREATURES #1, and had her own series in MARVEL CHILLERS. Currently, of course, Tigra is a member of *the West Coast Avengers*.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I have read about Siryn and that she is a mutant. I think that's incorrect! The definition of a mutant is: a) a mutant's powers or attributes are part of his genetic makeup from birth, and b) a mutant exhibits powers or attributes that his parents do not have ... if Magneto were to have a child with magnetic powers, that child would not be a mutant because there was nothing in his genetic makeup that differed him from his parents. Thus, Siryn is not a mutant since she is Banshee's daughter.

Banshee's powers are as follows: The ability to create powerful sonic waves with his voice with which he could achieve various effects and limited psionic abilities. And Siryn's powes are: The ability to create various sonic effects through the combined action of her vocal cords —she also has limited psionic powers. Thus, she is not a mutant, she merely has inherited the trait.

Bill Morrow
214 E. Jackson
Carlinville, IL 62626

Gee, maybe she's not a mutant! Of course, she could have some further mutation that we don't yet know about, but based on the evidence you mention, it looks like she's not truly a mutant. She's still not a normal human, naturally—and her genetic makeup may be such that she is for all intents and purposes indistinguishable from mutants, but that hasn't been revealed one way or the other.

Your letter will be passed on to *Jo Duffy* (writer of THE FALLEN ANGELS, in which Siryn will be appearing), *Chris Claremont* (co-creator of Siryn and X-MEN scribe) and *Ann Nocenti* (editor of both those books). Maybe one of them will address your questions more directly than we can.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I am a loyal devotee of *Ghost Rider*, and the proud owner of a GHOST RIDER collection. Every month I scan Marvel mags, hoping as I turn the pages that maybe I'll get a glance of the ol' hellspawn, yet every time my search ends in sorrow. Then one downcast day I saw "Goose Rider" in the pages of MARVEL TAILS. My sorrow turned to depression, and now on the back page of

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #36 I saw the mighty Zarathos posing as a candle! This is really low. Please answer my prayers and end this pain with a few paragraphs on the Brimstone Biker in an upcoming MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, informing me of his participation in the present Marvel Universe.

Spencer Stair
2653 Thomas Drive
McFarland, WI 53558

Well, *Spencer*, we hope you caught Zarathos's (if not the Ghost Rider's) guest-appearance in THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. And as for the Ghost Rider's other half, how's this paragraph from THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #2, page 31:

"*Johnny Blaze* had ... been permanently freed from his bond to Zarathos. Since then, Blaze and *Roxanne Simpson* have been traveling through America together by motorcyle."

Whether Johnny or Zarathos will show up in future Marvel books, either separately or together—only time will tell.

Dear Marvel,

The strangest question was asked to me, and it really made me think: "Why are there Limited Series?" The question seems odd but what I mean is instead of having the series limited why not have it keep going? This question does not include Limited Series such as NIGHTCRAWLER, GARGOYLE, ICEMAN and others like that because they're already in a comic book that keeps on going.

James Sauer
6862 Kittery Ave.
Citrus Heights, CA 95621

There are a number of reasons to do Limited Series, *James*. It's a good way to see if a concept is popular enough to merit its own series before actually doing the series (as with the CLOAK AND DAGGER Limited Series). Or if a creator has a story in mind, but doesn't want to do more than the one specific story (at least not right away), we can do it as a Limited Series. There are other reasons, but those cover the basics.

And with that, it's time to shuffle off the right side of the page into the staples and the inside back cover, because this letters column has run out of room. We'd like to indulge in some more pseudo-artistic foolishness, but alas, space doesn't permit, so we'll just quote *Roy Rogers*, and say: Happy trails!

continued from inside front cover

Gee, not bad at all! **X-MEN ANNUAL #9** went to the head of the class, with 73.3% of you giving it our highest grade. **Conan** is going to be kept after school, however—**CONAN ANNUAL #10** had the dubious honor of garnering the highest overall awful score.

And now for the best part. You did such a great job scoring last year's annuals, we're now going to ask you to grade this year's new crop! It's the same deal as last year—just clip out the report card, enter your grades and send it to us at the end of summer.

1986 MARVEL AGE.
SUMMER ANNUALS REPORT CARD

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	ART					
	OVERALL					
X-FACTOR #1	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
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CONAN #10	STORY					
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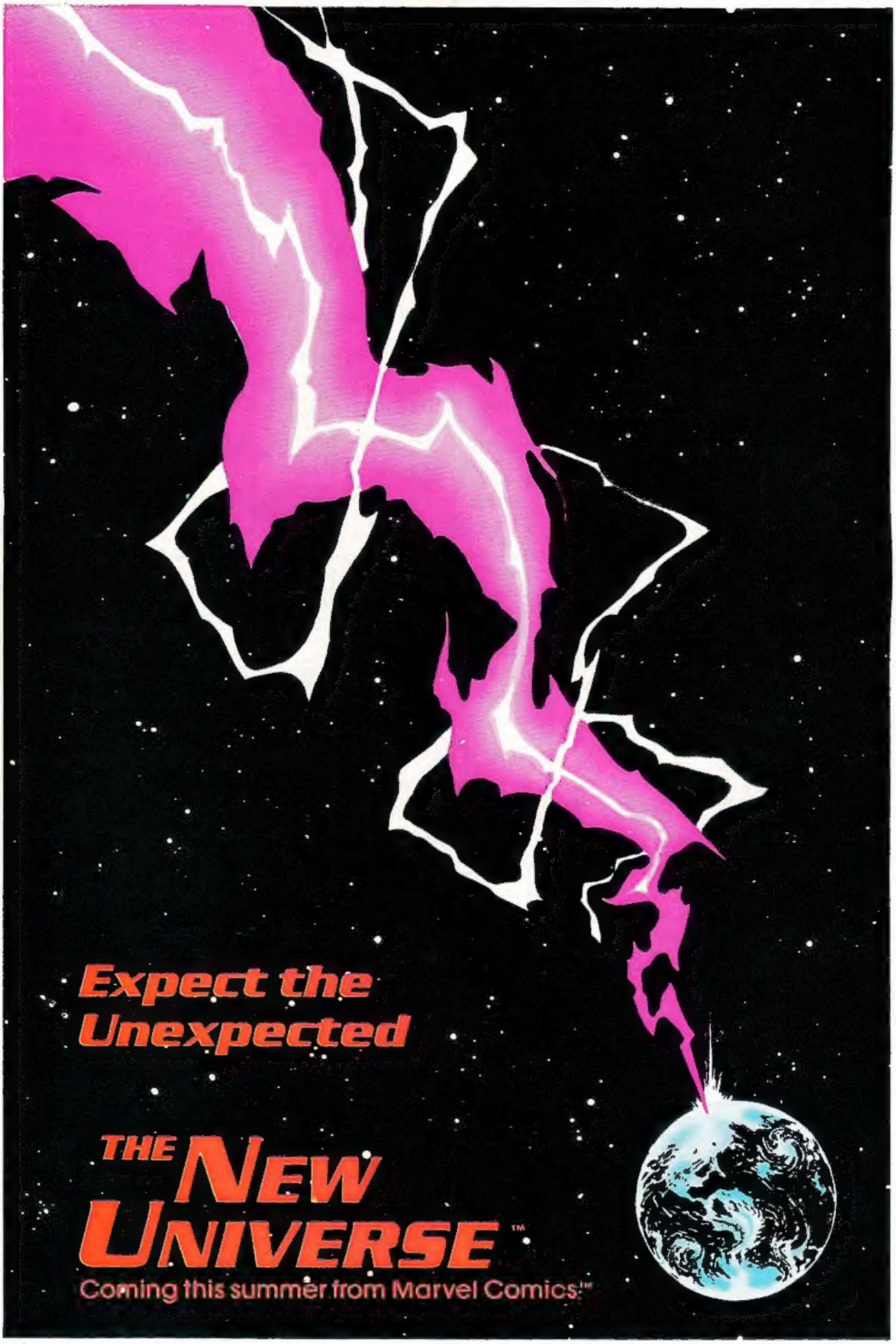

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